

SELECTIONS

— FROM —

TENNYSON



PR 5551
1891

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SELECTIONS FROM TENNYSON.

THE MAY QUEEN.

You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear;
To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year;
Of all the glad New-year, mother, the maddest merriest day;
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o'
the May.

There's many a black black eye, they say, but none so bright 5
as mine;

There's Margaret and Mary, there's Kate and Caroline:
But none so fair as little Alice in all the land they say,
So I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o'
the May.

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that I shall never wake,
If you do not call me loud when the day begins to break: 10
But I must gather knots of flowers, and buds and garlands gay,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o'
the May.

As I came up the valley whom think ye should I see,
But Robin leaning on the bridge beneath the hazel-tree?
He thought of that sharp look, mother, I gave him yesterday, 15
But I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o'
the May.

He thought I was a ghost, mother, for I was all in white,
And I ran by him without speaking, like a flash of light.
They call me cruel-hearted, but I care not what they say,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' 20
the May.

They say he's dying all for love, but that can never be:
They say his heart is breaking, mother—what is that to me
There's many a bolder lad 'ill woo me any summer day,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o'
the May.

25 Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow to the green,
And you'll be there, too, mother, to see me made the Queen;
For the shepherd lads on every side 'ill come from far away,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o'
the May.

The honeysuckle round the porch has wov'n its wavy bowers,
30 And by the meadow-trenches blow the faint sweet cuckoo-
flowers;
And the wild marsh-marigold shines like fire in swamps and
hollows gray,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o'
the May.

The night-winds come and go, mother, upon the meadow-grass,
And the happy stars above them seem to brighten as they pass;
35 There will not be a drop of rain the whole of the livelong day,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o'
the May.

All the valley, mother, 'ill be fresh and green and still,
And the cowslip and the crowfoot are over all the hill,
And the rivulet in the flowery dale 'ill merrily giance and play,
40 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o'
the May.

So you must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear,
To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all the glad New-year:
To-morrow 'ill be of all the year the maddest merriest day.
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o'
the May.

NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

If you're waking call me early, call me early, mother dear, 45
 For I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year.
 It is the last New-year that I shall ever see,
 Then you may lay me low i' the mould and think no more
 of me.

To-night I saw the sun set; he set and left behind
 The good old year, the dear old time, and all my peace of mind; 50
 And the New-year's coming up, mother, but I shall never see
 The blossom on the blackthorn, the leaf upon the tree.

Last May we made a crown of flowers: we had a merry day;
 Beneath the hawthorn on the green they made me Queen of May;
 And we danced about the may-pole and in the hazel copse, 55
 Till Charles's Wain came out above the tall white chimney-tops.

There's not a flower on all the hills: the frost is on the pane:
 I only wish to live till the snowdrops come again.
 I wish the snow would melt and the sun come out on high;
 I long to see a flower so before the day I die. 60

The building rook 'll caw from the windy tall elm-tree,
 And the tufted plover pipe along the fallow lea,
 And the swallow 'ill come back again with summer o'er the
 wave,
 But I shall lie alone, mother, within the mouldering grave.

Upon the chancel-casement, and upon that grave of mine, 65
 In the early early morning the summer sun 'ill shine,
 Before the red cock crows from the farm upon the hill,
 When you are warm-asleep, mother, and all the world is still.

When the flowers come again, mother, beneath the waning light
70 You'll never see me more in the long gray fields at night;
When from the dry dark wold the summer airs blow cool
On the oat-grass and the sword-grass, and the bulrush in the
pool.

You'll bury me, my mother, just beneath the hawthorn shade,
And you'll come sometimes and see me where I am lowly laid.
75 I shall not forget you. mother, I shall hear you when you pass,
With your feet above my head in the long and pleasant grass.

I have been wild and wayward, but you'll forgive me now;
You'll kiss me, my own mother, and forgive me ere I go;
Nay, nay, you must not weep, nor let your grief be wild,
80 You should not fret for me, mother, you have another child.

If I can I'll come again, mother, from out my resting-place;
Tho' you'll not see me, mother, I shall look upon your face;
Tho' I cannot speak a word, I shall harken what you say,
And be often, often with you when you think I'm far away.

85 Goodnight, goodnight, when I have said goodnight for evermore,
And you see me carried out from the threshold of the door;
Don't let Effie come to see me till my grave be growing green;
She'll be a better child to you than ever I have been.

She'll find my garden-tools upon the granary floor;
90 Let her take 'em: they are hers: I shall never garden more;
But tell her, when I'm gone, to train the rosebush that I set
About the parlour-window and the box of mignonette.

Goodnight, sweet mother: call me before the day is born.
All night I lie awake, but I fall asleep at morn;
95 But I would see the sun rise upon the glad New-year,
So, if you're waking, call me, call me early, mother dear.

CONCLUSION.

I THOUGHT to pass away before, and yet alive I am ;
 And in the fields all round I hear the bleating of the lamb.
 How sadly, I remember, rose the morning of the year !
 To die before the snowdrop came, and now the violet's here. 100

O sweet is the new violet, that comes beneath the skies,
 And sweeter is the young lamb's voice to me that cannot rise,
 And sweet is all the land about, and all the flowers that blow,
 And sweeter far is death than life to me that long to go.

It seem'd so hard at first, mother, to leave the blessed sun, 105
 And now it seems as hard to stay, and yet His will be done !
 But still I think it can't be long before I find release ;
 And that good man, the clergyman, has told me words of peace.

O blessings on his kindly voice and on his silver hair !
 And blessings on his whole life long, until he meet me there ! 110
 O blessings on his kindly heart and on his silver head !
 A thousand times I blest him, as he knelt beside my bed.

He taught me all the mercy, for he show'd me all the sin.
 Now, tho' my lamp was lighted late, there's One will let me in :
 Nor would I now be well, mother, again if that could be, 115
 For my desire is but to pass to Him that died for me.

I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or the death-watch beat,
 There came a sweeter token when the night and morning meet :
 But sit beside my bed, mother, and put your hand in mine,
 And Effie on the other side, and I will tell the sign. 120

All in the wild March-morning I heard the angels call ;
 It was when the moon was setting, and the dark was over all ;

The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to roll,
And in the wild March-morning I heard them call my soul.

125 For lying broad awake I thought of you and Effie dear ;
I saw you sitting in the house, and I no longer here ;
With all my strength I pray'd for both, and so I felt resign'd
And up the valley came a swell of music on the wind.

I thought that it was fancy, and I listen'd in my bed,
130 And then did something speak to me—I know not what was
said ;
For great delight and ~~s~~ondering took hold of all my mind,
And up the valley came ~~again~~ the music on the wind.

But you were sleeping ; and I said, 'It's not for them : it's
mine.'

And if it come three times, I thought, I take it for a sign.
135 And once again it came, and close beside the window-bars,
Then seem'd to go right up to Heaven and die among the stars.

So now I think my time is near. I trust it is. I know
The blessed music went that way my soul will have to go.
And for myself, indeed, I care not if I go to-day.
140 But, Effie, you must comfort *her* when I am past away.

And say to Robin a kind word, and tell him not to fret ;
There's many a worthier than I, would make him happy yet.
If I had lived—I cannot tell—I might have been his wife ;
But all these things have ceased to be, with my desire of life.

145 O look ! the sun begins to rise, the heavens are in a glow ;
He shines upon a hundred fields, and all of them I know.
And there I move no longer now, and there his light may
shine—
Wild flowers in the valley for other hands than mine.

O sweet and strange it seems to me, that ere this day is done
 The voice, that now is speaking, may be beyond the sun— 150
 For ever and for ever with those just souls and true—
 And what is life, that we should moan? why make we such ado?

For ever and for ever, all in a blessed home—
 And there to wait a little while till you and Effie come—
 To lie within the light of God, as I lie upon your breast— 155
 And the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

 YOU ASK ME WHY.

You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,
 Within this region I subsist,
 Whose spirits falter in the mist,
 And languish for the purple seas.

It is the land that freemen till,
 That sober-suited Freedom chose, 5
 The land, where girt with friends or foes
 A man may speak the thing he will;

A land of settled government,
 A land of just and old renown, 10
 Where Freedom slowly broadens down
 From precedent to precedent:

Where faction seldom gathers head,
 But by degrees to fullness wrought,
 The strength of some diffusive thought 15
 Hath time and space to work and spread,

- Should banded unions persecute
 Opinion, and induce a time
 When single thought is civil crime,
 20 And individual freedom mute ;
- Tho' Power should make from land to land
 The name of Britain trebly great—
 Tho' every channel of the State
 Should fill and choke with golden sand—
- 25 Yet waft me from the harbour-mouth,
 Wild wind ! I seek a warmer sky,
 And I will see before I die
 The palms and temples of the South.
-

OF OLD SAT FREEDOM.

- Of old sat Freedom on the heights,
 The thunders breaking at her feet ;
 Above her shook the starry lights :
 She heard the torrents meet.
- 5 There in her place she did rejoice,
 Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,
 But fragments of her mighty voice
 Came rolling on the wind.
- Then stept she down thro' town and field
 To mingle with the human race,
 10 And part by part to men reveal'd
 The fullness of her face—

LOVE THOU THY LAND.

41

Grave mother of majestic works,
From her isle-altar gazing down,
Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks, 15
And, King-like, wears the crown :

Her open eyes desire the truth.
The wisdom of a thousand years
Is in them. May perpetual youth
Keep dry their light from tears ; 20

That her fair form may stand and shine,
Make bright our days and light our dreams,
Turning to scorn with lips divine
The falsehood of extremes.

LOVE THOU THY LAND.

Love thou thy land, with love far-brought
From out the storied Past, and used
Within the Present, but transfused
Thro' future time by power of thought.

True love turn'd round on fixed poles, 5
Love, that endures not sordid ends,
For English natures, freemen, friends,
Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,
Nor feed with crude imaginings 10
The herd, wild hearts and feeble wings
That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might
To weakness, neither hide the ray
15 From those, not blind, who wait for day,
Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds ;
But let her herald, Reverence, fly
Before her to whatever sky
20 Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the years :
Cut Prejudice against the grain :
But gentle words are always gain :
Regard the weakness of thy peers :

25 Nor toil for title, place, or touch
Of pension, neither count on praise :
It grows to guerdon after-days :
Nor deal in watch-words overmuch :

Not clinging to some ancient saw ;
30 Not master'd by some modern term ;
Not swift nor slow to change, but firm ;
And in its season bring the law ;

That from Discussion's lip may fall
With Life, that, working strongly, binds—
35 Set in all lights by many minds,
To close the interests of all.

For nature also, cold and warm,
And moist and dry, devising long,
'Thro' many agents making strong,
40 Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control
 Our being, lest we rust in ease.
 We all are changed by still degrees,
 All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free
 To ingroove itself with that which flies,
 And work, a joint of state, that plies
 Its office, moved with sympathy. 45

A saying, hard to shape in act ;
 For all the past of Time reveals
 A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,
 Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact. 50

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife
 A motion toiling in the gloom—
 The Spirit of the years to come
 Yearning to mix himself with Life. 55

A slow-develop'd strength awaits
 Completion in a painful school ;
 Phantoms of other forms of rule,
 New Majesties of mighty States— 60

The warders of the growing hour,
 But vague in vapour, hard to mark ;
 And round them sea and air are dark
 With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,
 Is bodied forth the second whole. 65
 Regard gradation, lest the soul
 Of Discord race the rising wind ;

- 70 A wind to puff your idol-fires,
 And heap their ashes on the head;
 To shame the boast so often made,
 That we are wiser than our sires.
- 75 On yet, if Nature's evil star
 Drive men in manhood, as in youth,
 To follow flying steps of Truth
 Across the brazen bridge of war—
- 80 If New and Old, disastrous feud,
 Must ever shock, like armed foes,
 And this be true, till Time shall close.
 That Principles are rain'd in blood;
- Not yet the wise of heart would cease
 To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt,
 But with his hand against the hilt,
 Would pace the troubled land, like Peace;
- 85 Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,
 Would serve his kind in deed and word,
 Certain, if knowledge bring the sword,
 That knowledge takes the sword away—
- 90 Would love the gleams of good that broke
 From either side, nor veil his eyes:
 And if some dreadful need should rise
 Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke:
- To-morrow yet would reap to-day,
 As we bear blossoms of the dead;
 95 Earn well the thrifty months. nor wed
 Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

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LOCKSLEY HALL.

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn :
 Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle-
 horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,
 Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall ;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts, 5
 And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,
 Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,
 Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid. 10

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime
 With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time ;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed ;
 When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed :

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see ; 15
 Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would
 be.—

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast ;
 In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest ;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove ;
 In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts 20
 of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one
 so young,
 And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

And I said, 'My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee.'

25 On her pallid cheek and forehead came a colour and a light,
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of
sighs—

All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—

Saying, 'I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me
wrong ;

30 Saying, 'Dost thou love me, cousin?' weeping, 'I have loved
thee long.'

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing
hands ;

Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords
with might ;

Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out
of sight.

35 Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,
And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fulness of the
Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,
And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted ! O my Amy, mine no more !

40 O the dreary, dreary moorland ! O the barren, barren shore !

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue !

Is it well to wish thee happy ?—having known me—to decline
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine !

Yet it shall be: thou shalt lower to his level day by day, 45
 What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathise with
 clay.

As the husband is, the wife is: thou art mated with a clown,
 And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee
 down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel
 force,
 Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse. 50

What is this? his eyes are heavy: think not they are glazed
 with wine.

Go to him: it is thy duty: kiss him: take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought:
 Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter
 thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand— 55
 Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,
 Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of
 youth!
 Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth! 60

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule!
 Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of the fool!

Well—'tis well that I should bluster!—Hadst thou less un-
 worthy proved—

Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife was
 loved.

65 Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter
fruit?

I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' it be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summer to such length of years should
come

As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging rookery
home.

Where is comfort? in division of the records of the mind?

70 Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind?

I remember one that perish'd: sweetly did she speak and move:
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore?
No—she never loved me truly: love is love for evermore.

75 Comfort? comfort scorn'd of devils! this is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to
proof,

In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,
80 Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and
fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken
sleep,

To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt
weep.

Thou shalt hear the 'Never, never,' whisper'd by the phantom
years,

And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears:

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And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain. 85
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow: get thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a tender voice will cry.
'Tis a purer life than thine; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down: my latest rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast. 90

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.
Half is thine and half is his: it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's
heart.

'They were dangerous guides the feelings—she herself was not 95
exempt—

Truly, she herself had suffer'd'—Perish in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy! wherefore should I care?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like
these?

Every door is barr'd with gold and opens but to golden keys. 100

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy; what is that which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,
When the ranks are roll'd in vapour, and the winds are laid
with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honour 105
feels,

And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that earlier page.
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,
110 When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life.

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would
yield,

Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field.

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;

115 And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of
men:

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something
new;

That which they have done but earnest of the things that they
shall do:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
120 Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly
dew

From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;

125 Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing
warm,

With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-
storm;

Till the war-drum throb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were
furl'd

In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

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There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in
awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law. 130

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced
eye ;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint ;
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from point to
point :

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion creeping nigher, 135
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the
suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful
joys,
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever like a boy's? 140

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden
breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn, 145
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn:

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd string?
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a
thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness! woman's pleasure,
woman's pain—

Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower 150
brain :

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd with
mine,
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some
retreat

Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat ;

155 Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil starr'd ;—
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit—there to wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
160 Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from
the crag ;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited
tree—

Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

165 There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march
of mind,

In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake
mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope and
breathing space :

I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they shall
run,

170 Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the
sun ;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the
 brooks,
 Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy ! but I *know* my words are
 wild,
 But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains, 175
 Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains !

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me were sun or clime ?
 I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
 Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in 180
 Ajalon !

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us
 range,
 Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of
 change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day:
 Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life begun : 185
 Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh
 the Sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.
 Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall !
 Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree 190
 fall.

Comes a vapour from the margin, blackening over heath and
holt,

Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow ;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

ULYSSES.

- It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
5 That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel : I will drink
Life to the lees : all times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone ; on shore, and when
10 Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea : I am become a name ;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known ; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
15 Myself not least, but honour'd of them all ;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met ;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
20 Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use !
As tho' to breathe were Life. Life piled on life

Were all too little, and of one to me 25
 Little remains : but every hour is saved
 From that eternal silence, something more,
 A bringer of new things ; and vile it were
 For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
 And this gray spirit yearning in desire 30
 To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
 Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.
 This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
 Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil 35
 This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
 A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
 Subdue them to the useful and the good.
 Most blameless is he, centered in the sphere
 Of common duties, decent not to fail 40
 In offices of tenderness, and pay
 Meet adoration to my household gods,
 When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.
 There lies the port ; the vessel puffs her sail :
 There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners, 45
 Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me—
 That ever with a frolic welcome took
 The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
 Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old ;
 Old age hath yet his honour and his toil ; 50
 Death closes all : but something ere the end,
 Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
 Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
 The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks :
 The long day wanes : the slow moon climbs : the deep 55
 Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
 Push off, and sitting well in order smite

- The sounding furrows ; for my purpose holds
 60 To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
 Of all the western stars, until I die.
 It may be that the gulfs will wash us down :
 It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
 And see the great Achilles whom we knew.
 65 Tho' much is taken, much abides ; and tho'
 We are not now that strength which in old days
 Moved earth and heaven ; that which we are, we are ;
 One equal temper of heroic hearts,
 Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
 70 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.
-

ST. AGNES' EVE.

- DEEP on the convent-roof the snows
 Are sparkling to the moon :
 My breath to heaven like vapour goes :
 May my soul follow soon !
 5 The shadows of the convent-towers
 Slant down the snowy sward,
 Still creeping with the creeping hours
 That lead me to my Lord :
 Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
 10 As are the frosty skies,
 Or this first snowdrop of the year
 That in my bosom lies.

 As these white robes are soil'd and dark,
 To yonder shining ground ;
 15 As this pale taper's earthly spark,
 To yonder argent round ;

So shows my soul before the Lamb,
 My spirit before Thee ;
 So in mine earthly house I am,
 To that I hope to be. 20
 Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and far,
 Thro' all yon starlight keen,
 Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
 In raiment white and clean.

 He lifts me to the golden doors : 25
 The flashes come and go ;
 All heaven bursts her starry floors,
 And strows her lights below,
 And deepens on and up ! the gates
 Roll back, and far within 30
 For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
 To make me pure of sin.
 The sabbaths of Eternity,
 One sabbath deep and wide—
 A light upon the shining sea— 35
 The Bridegroom with his bride !

 SIR GALAHAD.

My good blade carves the casques of men,
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,
 My strength is as the strength of ten,
 Because my heart is pure.
 The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,
 The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
 The horse and rider reel :

10 They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
 And when the tide of combat stands,
 Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

 How sweet are looks that ladies bend
 On whom their favours fall !
15 For them I battle till the end,
 To save from shame and thrall :
 But all my heart is drawn above,
 My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine :
 I never felt the kiss of love,
20 Nor maiden's hand in mine.
 More bounteous aspects on me beam,
 Me mightier transports move and thrill ;
 So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
 A virgin heart in work and will.

25 When down the stormy crescent goes,
 A light before me swims,
 Between dark stems the forest glows,
 I hear a noise of hymns :
 Then by some secret shrine I ride ;
30 I hear a voice but none are there ;
 The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
 The tapers burning fair.
 Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
 The silver vessels sparkle clean,
35 The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
 And solemn chaunts resound between.

 Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
 I find a magic bark ;
40 I leap on board : no helmsman steers :
 I float till all is dark.

A gentle sound, an awful light !
Three angels bear the holy Grail :
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God ! 45
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides, the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go, 50
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads, 55
And gilds the driving hail.
I leave the plain, I climb the height ;
No branchy thicket shelter yields ;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields. 60

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear ;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease, 65
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams ;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armour that I wear, 70
This weight and size, this heart and eyes.
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
 And thro' the mountain-walls
 A rolling organ-harmony
 75 Swells up, and shakes and falls.
 Then move the trees, the copses nod,
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear :
 'O just and faithful knight of God !
 Ride on ! the prize is near.'
 80 So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;
 By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
 All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
 Until I find the holy Grail.

 ENID.

THE MARRIAGE OF GERAINT.

THE brave Geraint, a knight of Arthur's court,
 A tributary prince of Devon, one
 Of that great Order of the Table Round,
 Had married Enid, Yniol's only child,
 5 And loved her as he loved the light of Heaven.
 And as the light of Heaven varies, now
 At sunrise, now at sunset, now by night
 With moon and trembling stars, so loved Geraint
 To make her beauty vary day by day,
 10 In crimsons and in purples and in gems.
 And Enid, but to please her husband's eye,
 Who first had found and loved her in a state
 Of broken fortunes, daily fronted him
 In some fresh splendour ; and the Queen herself,
 15 Grateful to Prince Geraint for service done,
 Loved her, and often with her own white hands

Array'd and deck'd her, as the loveliest,
 Next after her own self, in all the court.
 And Enid loved the Queen, and with true heart
 Adored her, as the stateliest and the best 20
 And loveliest of all women upon earth.
 And seeing them so tender and so close,
 Long in their common love rejoiced Geraint.
 But when a rumour rose about the Queen,
 Touching her guilty love for Lancelot, 25
 Tho' yet there lived no proof, nor yet was heard
 The world's loud whisper breaking into storm,
 Not less Geraint believed it ; and there fell
 A horror on him, lest his gentle wife,
 Thro' that great tenderness for Guinevere, 30
 Had suffer'd, or should suffer any taint
 In nature : wherefore going to the King,
 He made this pretext, that his principedom lay
 Close on the borders of a territory,
 Wherein were bandit earls and caitiff knights, 35
 Assassins, and all flyers from the hand
 Of Justice, and whatever loathes a law :
 And therefore, till the King himself should please
 To cleanse this common sewer of all his realm,
 He craved a fair permission to depart, 40
 And there defend his marches ; and the King
 Mused for a little on his plea, but, last,
 Allowing it, the Prince and Enid rode,
 And fifty knights rode with them, to the shores
 Of Severn, and they past to their own land ; 45
 Where, thinking, that if ever yet was wife
 True to her lord, mine shall be so to me,
 He compass'd her with sweet observances
 And worship, never leaving her, and grew
 Forgetful of his promise to the King, 50

- Forgetful of the falcon and the hunt,
 Forgetful of the tilt and tournament,
 Forgetful of his glory and his name,
 Forgetful of his princedom and its cares.
 55 And this forgetfulness was hateful to her.
 And by and by the people, when they met
 In twos and threes, or fuller companies,
 Began to scoff and jeer and babble of him
 As of a prince whose manhood was all gone,
 60 And molten down in mere uxoriousness.
 And this she gather'd from the peoples eyes :
 This too the women who attired her head,
 To please her, dwelling on his boundless love,
 Told Enid, and they sadden'd her the more :
 65 And day by day she thought to tell Geraint,
 But could not out of bashful delicacy ;
 While he that watch'd her sadden, was the more
 Suspicious that her nature had a taint.

- At last, it chanced that on a summer morn
 70 (They sleeping each by either) the new sun
 Beat thro' the blindless casement of the room,
 And heated the strong warrior in his dreams ;
 Who, moving, cast the coverlet aside,
 And bared the knotted column of his throat,
 75 The massive square of his heroic breast,
 And arms on which the standing muscle sloped,
 As slopes a wild brook o'er a little stone,
 Running too vehemently to break upon it.
 And Enid woke and sat beside the couch,
 80 Admiring him, and thought within herself,
 Was ever man so grandly made as he ?
 Then, like a shadow, past the people's talk
 And accusation of uxoriousness

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Across her mind, and bowing over him,
Low to her own heart piteously she said : 85

‘O noble breast and all-puissant arms,
Am I the cause, I the poor cause that men
Reproach you, saying all your force is gone?
I *am* the cause, because I dare not speak
And tell him what I think and what they say. 90
And yet I hate that he should linger here ;
I cannot love my lord and not his name.
Far liefer had I gird his harness on him,
And ride with him to battle and stand by,
And watch his mightful hand striking great blows 95
At caitiffs and at wrongers of the world.
Far better were I laid in the dark earth,
Not hearing any more his noble voice,
Not to be folded more in these dear arms,
And darken'd from the high light in his eyes, 100
Than that my lord thro' me should suffer shame.
Am I so bold, and could I so stand by,
And see my dear lord wounded in the strife,
Or maybe pierced to death before mine eyes,
And yet not dare to tell him what I think, 105
And how men slur him, saying all his force
Is melted into mere effeminacy ?
O me, I fear that I am no true wife.’

Half inwardly, half audibly she spoke,
And the strong passion in her made her weep 110
True tears upon his broad and naked breast,
And these awoke him, and by great mischance
He heard but fragments of her later words,
And that she fear'd she was not a true wife,
And then he thought, ‘In spite of all my care, 115

- For all my pains, poor man, for all my pains,
She is not faithful to me, and I see her
Weeping for some gay knight in Arthur's hall.
Then tho' he loved and revered her too much
120 To dream she could be guilty of foul act,
Right thro' his manful breast darted the pang
That makes a man, in the sweet face of her
Whom he loves most, lonely and miserable.
At this he hurl'd his huge limbs out of bed,
125 And shook his drowsy squire awake and cried,
'My charger and her palfrey;' then to her,
'I will ride forth into the wilderness;
For tho' it seems my spurs are yet to win,
I have not fall'n so low as some would wish.
130 And thou, put on thy worst and meanest dress,
And ride with me.' And Enid asked, amazed,
'If Enid errs, let Enid learn her fault.'
But he, 'I charge thee, ask not, but obey.'
Then she bethought her of a faded silk,
135 A faded mantle and a faded veil,
And moving toward a cedarn cabinet,
Wherein she kept them folded reverently
With sprigs of summer laid between the folds,
She took them and arrayed herself therein,
140 Remembering when first he came on her
Drest in that dress, and how he loved her in it,
And all her foolish fears about the dress,
And all his journey to her, as himself
Had told her, and their coming to the court.
145 For Arthur on the Whitsuntide before
Held court at old Caerleon upon Usk.
There on a day, he sitting high in hall,
Before him came a forester of Dean,
Wet from the woods, with notice of a hart

Taller than all his fellows, milky-white, 150
 First seen that day : these things he told the King.
 Then the good King gave order to let blow
 His horns for hunting on the morrow morn.
 And when the Queen petitioned for his leave
 To see the hunt, allow'd it easily. 155
 So with the morning all the court were gone.
 But Guinevere lay late into the morn,
 Lost in sweet dreams, and dreaming of her love
 For Lancelot, and forgetful of the hunt ;
 But rose at last, a single maiden with her, 160
 Took horse, and forded Usk, and gain'd the wood ;
 There, on a little knoll, beside it stay'd
 Waiting to hear the hounds ; but heard instead
 A sudden sound of hoofs, for Prince Geraint,
 Late also, wearing neither hunting dress 165
 Nor weapon, save a golden-hilted brand,
 Came quickly flashing thro' the shallow ford
 Behind them, and so gallop'd up the knoll.
 A purple scarf, at either end whereof
 There swung an apple of the purest gold, 170
 Sway'd round about him, as he gallop'd up
 To join them, glancing like a dragon-fly
 In summer suit and silks of holiday.
 Low bow'd the tributary Prince, and she,
 Sweetly and statelily, and with all grace 175
 Of womanhood and queenhood, answer'd him :
 ' Late, late, Sir Prince,' she said, ' later than we !'
 ' Yea, noble Queen,' he answer'd, ' and so late
 That I but come like you to see the hunt,
 Not join it.' ' Therefore wait with me,' she said ; 180
 For on this little knoll, if anywhere,
 There is a good chance that we shall hear the hounds :
 Here often they break covert at our feet.'

- And while they listened for the distant hunt,
185 And chiefly for the baying of Cavall,
King Arthur's hound of deepest mouth, there rode
Full slowly by a knight, lady, and dwarf ;
Whereof the dwarf lagg'd latest, and the knight
Had vizor up, and show'd a youthful face,
190 Imperious, and of haughtiest lineaments.
And Guinevere, not mindful of his face
In the King's hall, desired his name, and sent
Her maiden to demand it of the dwarf ;
Who being vicious, old and irritable,
195 And doubling all his master's vice of pride,
Made answer sharply that she should not know.
'Then will I ask it of himself,' she said,
'Nay, by my faith, thou shalt not,' cried the dwarf ;
'Thou art not worthy ev'n to speak of him ;'
200 And when she put her horse toward the knight,
Struck at her with his whip, and she return'd
Indignant to the Queen ; whereat Geraint
Exclaiming 'Surely I will learn the name,'
Made sharply to the dwarf, and asked it of him,
205 Who answer'd as before ; and when the Prince
Had put his horse in motion toward the knight,
Struck at him with his whip, and cut his cheek.
The Prince's blood spirted upon the scarf,
Dyeing it ; and his quick, instinctive hand
210 Caught at the hilt, as to abolish him :
But he, from his exceeding manfulness
And pure nobility of temperament,
Wroth to be wroth at such a worm, refrain'd
From ev'n a word, and so returning said :
215 'I will avenge this insult, noble Queen,
Done in your maiden's person to yourself :
And I will track this vermin to their earths :

For tho' I ride unarm'd, I do not doubt
 To find, at some place I shall come at, arms
 On loan, or else for pledge ; and, being found, 220
 Then will I fight him, and will break his pride,
 And on the third day will again be here,
 So that I be not fall'n in fight. Farewell.'

'Farewell, fair Prince,' answer'd the stately Queen.
 'Be prosperous in this journey, as in all ; 225
 And may you light on all things that you love,
 And live to wed with her whom first you love ;
 But ere you wed with any, bring your bride,
 And I, were she the daughter of a king,
 Yea, tho' she were a beggar from the hedge, 230
 Will clothe her for her bridals like the sun.'

And Prince Geraint, now thinking that he heard
 The noble hart at bay, now the far horn,
 A little vext at losing of the hunt,
 A little at the vile occasion, rode, 235
 By ups and downs, thro' many a grassy glade
 And valley, with fixt eye following the three.
 At last they issued from the world of wood,
 And climb'd upon a fair and even ridge,
 And show'd themselves against the sky and sank. 240
 And thither came Geraint, and underneath
 Beheld the long street of a little town
 In a long valley, on one side whereof,
 White from the mason's hand, a fortress rose ;
 And on one side a castle in decay, 245
 Beyond a bridge that spanned a dry ravine ;
 And out of town and valley came a noise
 As of a broad brook o'er a shingly bed
 Brawling, or like a clamour of the rooks
 At distance ere they settle for the night. 250

- And onward to the fortress rode the three,
 And enter'd, and were lost behind the walls.
 'So,' thought Geraint, 'I have track'd him to his earth.'
 And down the long street riding wearily,
 255 Found every hostel full, and everywhere
 Was hammer laid to hoof, and the hot hiss
 And bustling whistle of the youth who scour'd
 His master's armour; and of such a one
 He ask'd, 'What means the tumult in the town?'
 260 Who told him, scouring still, 'The sparrow-hawk!'
- Then riding close behind an ancient churl,
 Who, smitten by the dusty sloping beam,
 Went sweating underneath a sack of corn,
 Ask'd yet once more what meant the hubbub here!
 265 Who answer'd gruffly, 'Ugh! the sparrow-hawk.'
 Then riding further past an armourer's,
 Who, with back turn'd, and bow'd above his work,
 Sat riveting a helmet on his knee,
 He put the self-same query, but the man
 270 Not turning round, nor looking at him, said:
 'Friend, he that labours for the sparrow-hawk
 Has little time for idle questioners.'
 Whereat Geraint flashed into sudden spleen:
 'A thousand pips eat up your sparrow-hawk!
 275 Tits, wrens, and all wing'd nothings peck him dead!
 Ye think the rustic cackle of your bourg
 The murmur of the world! What is it to me?
 O wretched set of sparrows, one and all,
 Who pipe of nothing but of sparrow-hawks!
 280 Speak, if ye be not like the rest, hawk-mad,
 Where can I get me harbourage for the night?
 And arms, arms, arms to fight my enemy? Speak!
 Whereat the armourer turning all amazed
 And seeing one so gay in purple silks,
 285 Came forward with the helmet yet in hand

And answer'd, 'Pardon me, O stranger knight ;
 We hold a tourney here to-morrow morn,
 And there is scanty time for half the work.
 Arms? truth! I know not: all are wanted here.
 Harbourage? truth, good truth, I know not, save, 290
 It may be, at Earl Yniol's, o'er the bridge
 Yonder.' He spoke and fell to work again.

Then rode Geraint, a little spleenful yet,
 Across the bridge that spann'd the dry ravine
 There musing sat the hoary-headed Earl, 295
 (His dress a suit of fray'd magnificence,
 Once fit for feasts of ceremony) and said:
 'Whither, fair son?' to whom Geraint replied,
 'O friend, I seek a harbourage for the night.'
 Then Yniol, 'Enter therefore and partake 300
 The slender entertainment of a house
 Once rich, now poor, but ever open-door'd.'
 'Thanks, venerable friend,' replied Geraint ;
 'So that ye do not serve me sparrow-hawks
 For supper, I will enter, I will eat 305
 With all the passion of a twelve hours' fast.'
 Then sigh'd and smiled the hoary-headed Earl,
 And answer'd, 'Graver cause than yours is mine
 To curse this hedgerow thief, the sparrow-hawk :
 But in, go in ; for save yourself desire it, 310
 We will not touch upon him ev'n in jest.'

Then rode Geraint into the castle court,
 His charger trampling many a prickly star
 Of sprouted thistle on the the broken stones.
 He look'd and saw that all was ruinous. 315
 Here stood a shatter'd archway plumed with fern ;
 And here had fall'n a great part of a tower,
 Whole, like a crag that tumbles from the cliff,

320 And like a crag was gay with wilding flowers :
 And high above a piece of turret stair,
 Worn by the feet that now were silent, wound
 Bare to the sun, and monstrous ivy-stems
 Claspt the gray walls with hairy-fibred arms,
 And suck'd the joining of the stones, and look'd
 325 A knot, beneath, of snakes, aloft, a grove.

And while he waited in the castle court,
 The voice of Enid, Yniol's daughter, rang
 Clear thro' the open casement of the hall,
 Singing ; and as the sweet voice of a bird,
 330 Heard by the lander in a lonely isle,
 Moves him to think what kind of a bird it is
 That sings so delicately clear, and make
 Conjecture of the plumage and the form ;
 So the sweet voice of Enid moved Geraint ;
 335 And made him like a man abroad at morn
 When first the liquid note beloved of men
 Comes flying over many a windy wave
 To Britain, and in April suddenly
 Breaks from a coppice gemm'd with green and red,
 340 And he suspends his converse with a friend,
 Or it may be the labour of his hands,
 To think or say, ' There is the nightingale ;'
 So fared it with Geraint, who thought and said,
 ' Here, by God's grace, is the one voice for me.'

345 It chanced the song that Enid sang was one
 Of Fortune and her wheel, and Enid sang :

' Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel and lower the proud ,
 Turn thy wild wheel thro' sunshine, storm, and cloud ;
 Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.

350 ' Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with smile or frown ;

With that wild wheel we go not up or down ;
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great.

‘Smile and we smile, the lords of many lands ;
Frown and we smile, the lords of our own hands ;
For man is man and unaster of his fate. 355

‘Turn, turn thy wheel above the staring crowd ;
Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the cloud ;
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.’

‘Hark, by the bird’s song ye may learn the nest,’
Said Yniol ; ‘enter quickly.’ Entering then, 360
Right o’er a mount of newly-fallen stones,
The dusky-rafter’d many-cobweb’d hall,
He found an ancient dame in dim brocade ;
And near her, like a blossom vermeil-white,
That lightly breaks a faded flower-sheath, 365
Moved the fair Enid, all in faded silk,
Her daughter. In a moment thought Geraint,
‘Here by God’s rood is the one maid for me.’
But none spake word except the hoary Earl :
‘Enid, the good knight’s horse stands in the court 370
Take him to stall, and give him corn, and then
Go to the town and buy us flesh and wine ;
And we will make us merry as we may.
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great.’

He spake : the Prince, as Enid past him, fain 375
To follow, strode a stride, but Yniol caught
His purple scarf, and held, and said, ‘Forbear !
Rest ! the good house, tho’ ruin’d, O my son,
Endures not that her guest should serve himself.’
And reverencing the custom of the house 380
Geraint, from utter courtesy, forbore.

So Enid took his charger to the stall ;
 And after went her way across the bridge,
 And reached the town, and while the Prince and Earl
 385 Yet spoke together, came again with one,
 A youth, that following with a costrel bore
 The means of goodly welcome, flesh and wine.
 And Enid brought sweet cakes to make them cheer,
 And in her veil enfolded, manchet bread.
 390 And then, because their hall must also serve
 For kitchen, boiled the flesh, and spread the board,
 And stood behind, and waited on the three,
 And seeing her so sweet and serviceable,
 Geraint had longing in him evermore
 395 To stoop and kiss the tender little thumb,
 That crost the trencher as she laid it down :
 But after all had eaten, then Geraint,
 For now the wine made summer in his veins,
 Let his eye rove in following, or rest
 400 On Enid at her lowly hand-maid work,
 Now here, now there about the dusky hall ;
 Then suddenly address the hoary Earl :

‘Fair host and Earl, I pray your courtesy ;
 This sparrow-hawk, what is he ? tell me of him.
 405 His name ; but no, good faith, I will not have it :
 For if he be the knight whom late I saw
 Ride into that new fortress by your town,
 White from the mason’s hand, then have I sworn
 From his own lips to have it—I am Geraint
 410 Of Devon—for this morning when the Queen
 Sent her own maiden to demand the name ;
 His dwarf, a vicious under-shapen thing,
 Struck at her with his whip, and she returned
 Indignant to the Queen ; and then I swore
 415 That I would track this caitiff to his hold,

And fight and break his pride, and have it of him.
 And all unarm'd I rode and thought to find
 Arms in your town, where all the men are mad ;
 They take the rustic murmur of their bourg
 For the great wave that echoes round the world ; 420
 They would not hear me speak : but if ye know
 Where I can light on arms, or if yourself
 Should have them, tell me, seeing I have sworn
 That I will break his pride and learn his name,
 Avenging this great insult done the Queen.' 425

Then cried Earl Yniol, ' Art thou he indeed,
 Geraint, a name far-sounded among men
 For noble deeds? and truly I, when first
 I saw you moving by me on the bridge,
 Felt ye were somewhat, yea, and by your state 430
 And presence might have guess'd you one of those
 That eat in Arthur's hall at Camelot.
 Nor speak I now from foolish flattery ;
 For this dear child hath often heard me praise
 Your feats of arms, and often when I paused 435
 Hath ask'd again, and ever loved to hear ;
 So grateful is the noise of noble deeds
 To noble hearts who see but acts of wrong :
 O never yet had woman such a pair
 Of suitors as this maiden ; first Limours, 440
 A creature wholly given to brawls and wine,
 Drunk even when he woo'd ; and be he dead
 I know not, but he past to the wild land.
 The second was your foe, the sparrow-hawk,
 My curse, my nephew—I will not let his name 445
 Slip from my lips if I can help it—he,
 When I that knew him fierce and turbulent
 Refused her to him, then his pride awoke ;
 And since the proud man often is the mean,

- 450 He sow'd a slander in the common ear,
 Affirming that his father left him gold,
 And in my charge, which was not render'd to him ;
 Bribed with large promises the men who served
 About my person, the more easily
 455 Because my means were somewhat broken into
 Thro' open doors and hospitality;
 Raised my own town against me in the night
 Before my Enid's birthday, sacked my house ;
 From mine own earldom foully ousted me ;
 460 Built that new fort to overawe my friends,
 For truly there are those who love me yet ;
 And keeps me in this ruinous castle here,
 Where doubtless he would put me soon to death,
 But that his pride too much despises me :
 465 And I myself sometimes despise myself ;
 For I have let men be, and have their way ;
 Am much too gentle, have not used my power ;
 Nor know I whether I be very base
 Or very manful, whether very wise
 470 Or very foolish ; only this I know,
 That whatsoever evil happen to me,
 I seem to suffer nothing heart or limb,
 But can endure it all most patiently.'
- ' Well said, true heart,' replied Geraint, ' but arms,
 475 That if the sparrow-hawk, this nephew, fight
 In next day's tourney, I may break his pride.'
- And Yniol answer'd. ' Arms, indeed, but old
 And rusty, old and rusty, Prince Geraint,
 Are mine, and therefore at thine asking, thine.
 480 But in this tournament can no man tilt,
 Except the lady he loves best be there.
 Two forks are fixt into the meadow ground,

And over these is placed a silver wand,
 And over that a golden sparrow-hawk,
 The prize of beauty for the fairest there. 485
 And this, what knight soever be in field
 Lays claim to for the lady at his side,
 And tilts with my good nephew thereupon,
 Who being apt at arms and big of bone
 Has ever won it for the lady with him, 490
 And toppling over all antagonism
 Has earned himself the name of sparrow-hawk.
 But thou, that hast no lady, canst not fight.'

To whom Geraint with eyes all bright replied,
 Leaning a little toward him, 'Thy leave! 495
 Let *me* lay lance in rest, O noble host,
 For this dear child, because I never saw,
 Tho' having seen all beauties of our time,
 Nor can see elsewhere anything, so fair.
 And if I fall her name will yet remain 500
 Untarnish'd as before; but if I live,
 So aid me Heaven when at mine uttermost,
 As I will make her truly my true wife.'

Then, howsoever patient, Yniol's heart
 Danced in his bosom, seeing better days. 505
 And looking round he saw not Enid there,
 (Who hearing her own name had stol'n away)
 But that old dame, to whom full tenderly
 And fondling all her hand in his he said,
 'Mother, a maiden is a tender thing, 510
 And best by her that bore her understood.
 Go thou to rest, but ere thou go to rest
 Tell her, and prove her heart toward the Prince.'

So spake the kindly-hearted Earl, and she

- 515 With frequent smile and nod departing fount,
 Half disarray'd as to her rest, the girl ;
 Whom first she kiss'd on either cheek, and then
 On either shining shoulder laid a hand,
 And kept her off and gazed upon her face,
 520 And told her all their converse in the hall,
 Proving her heart : but never light and shade
 Coursed one another more on open ground
 Beneath a troubled heaven, than red and pale
 Across the face of Enid hearing her ;
 525 While slowly falling as a scale that falls,
 When weight is added only grain by grain,
 Sank her sweet head upon her gentle breast ;
 Nor did she lift an eye nor speak a word,
 Rapt in the fear and in the wonder of it ;
 530 So moving without answer to her rest
 She found no rest, and ever fail'd to draw
 The quiet night into her blood, but lay
 Contemplating her own unworthiness ;
 And when the pale and bloodless east began
 535 To quicken to the sun, arose, and raised
 Her mother too, and hand in hand they moved
 Down to the meadow where the jousts were held,
 And waited there for Yniol and Geraint.

- And thither came the twain, and when Geraint
 540 Beheld her first in field, awaiting him.
 He felt, were she the prize of bodily force,
 Himself beyond the rest pushing could move
 The chair of Idris: Yniol's rusted arms
 Were on his princely person, but thro' these
 545 Princelike his bearing shone ; and errant knights
 And ladies came, and by and by the town
 Flow'd in, and settling circled all the lists.
 And there they fixt the forks into the ground,

And over these they placed the silver wand,
 And over that the golden sparrow-hawk. 550
 Then Yniol's nephew, after trumpet blown,
 Spake to the lady with him and proclaim'd,
 'Advance and take, as fairest of the fair,
 What I these two years past have won for thee,
 The prize of beauty.' Loudly spake the Prince, 555
 'Forbear: there is a worthier,' and the knight
 With some surprise and thrice as much disdain
 Turn'd, and beheld the four, and all his face
 Glow'd like the heart of a great fire at Yule,
 So burnt he was with passion, crying out, 560
 'Do battle for it then,' no more; and thrice
 They clash'd together, and thrice they break their spears.
 Then each, dishorsed and drawing, lash'd at each
 So often and with such blows, that all the crowd
 Wonder'd and now and then from distant walls 565
 There came a clapping as of phantom hands.
 So twice they fought, and twice they breathed, and still
 The dew of their great labour, and the blood
 Of their strong bodies, flowing, drain'd their force.
 But either's force was match'd till Yniol's cry, 570
 'Remember that great insult done the Queen,'
 Increased Geraint's, who heaved his blade aloft,
 And crack'd the helmet thro', and bit the bone,
 And fell'd him, and set foot upon his breast,
 And said, 'Thy name?' To whom the fallen man 575
 Made answer, groaning, 'Edyrn, son of Nudd!
 Ashamed am I that I should tell it thee.
 My pride is broken: men have seen my fall.'
 'Then, Edyrn, son of Nudd,' replied Geraint,
 'These two things shalt thou do, or else thou diest. 580
 First, thou thyself, with damsel and with dwarf,
 Shalt ride to Arthur's court, and coming there,
 Crave pardon for that insult done the Queen,

And shalt abide her judgment on it ; next,
585 Thou shalt give back their earldom to thy kin.
These two things shalt thou do, or thou shalt die.'
And Edyrn answer'd, 'These things will I do,
For I have never yet been overthrown,
And thou hast overthrown me, and my pride
590 Is broken down, for Enid sees my fall !'
And rising up, he rode to Arthur's court,
And there the Queen forgave him easily.
And being young, he changed and came to loathe
His crime of traitor, slowly drew himself
595 Bright from his old dark life, and fell at last
In the great battle fighting for the King.

But when the third day from the hunting-morn
Made a low splendour in the world, and wings
Moved in her ivy, Enid, for she lay
600 With her fair head in the dim-yellow light,
Among the dancing shadows of the birds,
Woke and bethought her of her promise given
No later than last eve to Prince Geraint—
So bent he seem'd on going the third day,
605 He would not leave her, till her promise given—
To ride with him this morning to the court,
And there be made known to the stately Queen,
And there be wedded with all ceremony.
At this she cast her eyes upon her dress,
610 And thought it never yet had look'd so mean.
For as a leaf in mid-November is
To what it was in mid-October, seem'd
The dress that now she look'd on to the dress
She look'd on ere the coming of Geraint.
615 And still she look'd, and still the terror grew
Of that strange bright and dreadful thing, a court,
All staring at her in her faded silk :

And softly to her own sweet heart she said :

‘This noble prince who won our earldom back,
So splendid in his acts and his attire, 620
Sweet heaven, how much I shall discredit him !
Would he could tarry with us here awhile,
But being so beholden to the Prince,
It were but little grace in any of us,
Bent as he seem’d on going this third day, 625
To seek a second favour at his hands.
Yet if he could but tarry a day or two,
Myself would work eye dim, and finger lame,
Far liefer than so much discredit him.’

And Enid fell in longing for a dress 630
All branch’d and flower’d with gold, a costly gift
Of her good mother, given her on the night
Before her birthday, three sad years ago,
That night of fire, when Edyrn sack’d their house,
And scatter’d all they had to all the winds : 635
For while the mother show’d it, and the two
Were turning and admiring it, the work
To both appear’d so costly, rose a cry
That Edyrn’s men were on them, and they fled
With little save the jewels they had on, 640
Which being sold and sold had bought them bread :
And Edyrn’s men had caught them in their flight,
And placed them in this ruin ; and she wish’d
The Prince had found her in her ancient home ;
Then let her fancy flit across the past, 645
And roam the goodly places that she knew ;
And last bethought her how she used to watch,
Near that old home, a pool of golden carp ;
And one was patch’d and blurr’d and lustreless
Among his burnish’d brethren of the pool ; 650

- And half asleep she made comparison
Of that and these to her own faded self
And the gay court, and fell asleep again ;
And dreamt herself was such a faded form
655 Among her burnish'd sisters of the pool ;
But this was in the garden of a king ;
And tho' she lay dark in the pool, she knew
That all was bright ; that all about were birds
Of sunny plume in gilded trellis work ;
660 That all the turf was rich in plots that look'd
Each like a garnet or a turkis in it ;
And lords and ladies of the high court went
In silver tissue talking things of state ;
And children of the King in cloth of gold
665 Glanced at the doors or gambol'd down the walks ;
And while she thought 'They will not see me,' came
A stately queen whose name was Guinevere,
And all the children in their cloth of gold
Ran to her, crying, 'If we have fish at all
670 Let them be gold ; and charge the gardners now
To pick the faded creature from the pool,
And cast it on the mixen that it die.'
And therewithal one came and seized on her,
And Enid started waking, with her heart
675 All overshadow'd by the foolish dream,
And lo ! it was her mother grasping her
To get her well awake ; and in her hand
A suit of bright apparel, which she laid
Flat on the couch, and spoke exultingly :
- 680 'See here, my child, how fresh the colours look,
How fast they hold like colours of a shell
That keeps the wear and polish of the wave.
Why not ? It never yet was worn, I trow :
Look on it, child, and tell me if ye know it.'

And Enid look'd, but all confused at first, 685
 Could scarce divide it from her foolish dream :
 Then suddenly she knew it and rejoiced,
 And answer'd, 'Yea, I know it ; your good gift,
 So sadly lost on that unhappy night ;
 Your own good gift !' 'Yea, surely,' said the dame, 690
 'And gladly given again this happy morn.
 For when the jousts were ended yesterday,
 Went Yniol thro' the town, and everywhere
 He found the sack and plunder of our house
 All scatter'd thro' the houses of the town ; 695
 And gave command that all which once was ours
 Should now be ours again : and yester-eve,
 While ye were talking sweetly with your Prince,
 Came one with this and laid it in my hand,
 For love or fear, or seeking favour of us, 700
 Because we have our earldom back again.
 And yester-eve I would not tell you of it,
 But kept it for a sweet surprise at morn.
 Yea, truly is it not a sweet surprise ?
 For I myself unwillingly have worn 705
 My faded suit, as you, my child, have yours,
 And howsoever patient, Yniol his.
 Ah, dear, he took me from a goodly house,
 With store of rich apparel, sumptuous fare,
 And page, and maid, and squire, and seneschal, 710
 And pastime both of hawk and hound, and all
 That appertains to noble maintenance.
 Yea, and he brought me to a goodly house ;
 But since our fortune swerved from sun to shade,
 And all thro' that young traitor, cruel need 715
 Constrain'd us, but a better time has come ;
 So clothe yourself in this, that better fits
 Our mended fortunes and a Prince's bride :
 For tho' ye won the prize of fairest fair,

- 720 And tho' I heard him call you fairest fair,
 Let never maiden think, however fair,
 She is not fairer in new clothes than old.
 And should some great court-lady say, the Prince
 Hath pick'd a ragged-robin from the hedge,
 725 And like a madman brought her to the court,
 Then were ye shamed, and, worse, might shame the Prince.
 To whom we are beholden ; but I know,
 When my dear child is set forth at her best,
 That neither court nor country, tho' they sought
 730 Thro' all the provinces like those of old
 That lighted on Queen Esther, has her match.'

- Here ceased the kindly mother out of breath ;
 And Enid listen'd brightening as she lay ;
 Then, as the white and glittering star of morn
 735 Parts from a bank of snow, and by and by
 Slips into golden cloud, the maiden rose,
 And left her maiden couch, and robed herself,
 Help'd by the mother's careful hand and eye,
 Without a mirror, in the gorgeous gown ;
 740 Who, after, turn'd her daughter round, and said,
 She never yet had seen her half so fair ;
 And call'd her like that maiden in the tale,
 Whom Gwydion made by glamour out of flowers,
 And sweeter than the bride of Cassivelaun,
 745 Flur, for whose love the Roman Cæsar first
 Invaded Britain, ' But we beat him back,
 As this great Prince invaded us, and we,
 Not beat him back, but welcomed him with joy.
 And I can scarcely ride with you to court,
 750 For old am I, and rough the ways and wild ;
 But Yniol goes, and I full oft shall dream
 I see my princess as I see her now,
 Clothed with my gift, and gay among the gay.'

But while the women thus rejoiced, Geraint
 Woke where he slept in the high hall, and call'd 755
 For Enid, and when Yniol made report
 Of that good mother making Enid gay
 In such apparel as might well beseem
 His princess, or indeed the stately Queen,
 He answer'd : ' Earl, entreat her by my love, 760
 Albeit I give no reason but my wish,
 That she ride with me in her faded silk,'
 Yniol with that hard message went ; it fell
 Like flaws in summer laying lusty corn :
 For Enid, all abash'd she knew not why, 765
 Dared not to glance at her good mother's face,
 But silently, in all obedience,
 Her mother silent too, nor helping her,
 Laid from her limbs the costly-broider'd gift,
 And robed them in her ancient suit again, 770
 And so descended. Never man rejoiced
 More than Geraint to greet her thus attired ;
 And glancing all at once as keenly at her
 As careful robins eye the delver's toil,
 Made her cheek burn and either eyelid fall, 775
 But rested with her sweet face satisfied ;
 Then seeing cloud upon the mother's brow,
 Her by both hands he caught, and sweetly said,

'O my new mother, be not wroth or grieved
 At thy new son, for my petition to her. 780
 When late I left Caerleon, our great Queen,
 In words whose echo lasts, they were so sweet,
 Made promise, that whatever bride I brought,
 Herself would clothe her like the sun in Heaven.
 Thereafter, when I reach'd this ruin'd hall, 785
 Beholding one so bright in dark estate,
 I vow'd that could I gain her, our fair Queen,

- 790 No hand but hers, should make your Enid burst
Sunlike from cloud—and likewise thought perhaps,
That service done so graciously would bind
The two together ; fain I would the two
Should love each other : how can Enid find
- 795 A nobler friend ? Another thought was mine ;
I came among you here so suddenly
That tho' her gentle presence at the lists
Might well have served for proof that I was loved,
I doubted whether daughter's tenderness,
- 800 Or easy nature, might not let itself
Be moulded by your wishes for her weal ;
Or whether some false sense in her own self
Of my contrasting brightness, overbore
Her fancy, dwelling in this dusky hall ;
- 805 And such a sense might make her long for court
And all its perilous glories : and I thought,
That could I somehow prove such force in her
Link'd with such love for me, that at a word
(No reason given her) she could cast aside
- 810 A splendour dear to women, new to her,
And therefore dearer ; or if not so new,
Yet therefore tenfold dearer by the power
Of intermitted usage : then I felt
That I could rest, a rock in ebbs and flows,
- 815 Fixt on her faith. Now therefore I do rest,
A prophet certain of my prophecy,
That never shadow of mistrust can cross
Between us. Grant me pardon for my thoughts :
And for my strange petition I will make
- 820 Amends hereafter by some gaudy-day,
When your fair child shall wear your costly gift
Beside your own warm hearth, with, on her knees,
Who knows ? another gift of the high God,
Which, maybe, shall have learned to lisp you thanks.'

He spoke : the mother smiled, but half in tears,
Then brought a mantle down and wrapt her in it,
And claspt and kiss'd her, and they rode away. 825

Now thrice that morning Guinevere had climb'd
The giant tower, from whose high crest, they say,
Men saw the goodly hills of Somerset, 830
And white sails flying on the yellow sea ;
But not to goodly hill or yellow sea
Look'd the fair Queen, but up the vale of Usk,
By the flat meadow, till she saw them come ;
And then descending met them at the gates, 835
Embraced her with all welcome as a friend,
And did her honour as the Prince's bride,
And clothed her for her bridals like the sun ;
And all that week was old Caerleon gay,
For by the hands of Dubric the high saint, 840
They twain were wedded with all ceremony.

And this was on the last year's Whitsuntide.
But Enid ever kept the faded silk,
Remembering how first he came on her,
Drest in that dress, and how he loved her in it, 845
And all her foolish fears about the dress,
And all his journey toward her as himself
Had told her, and their coming to the court.

And now this morning when he said to her,
'Put on your worst and meanest dress,' she found 850
And took it, and arrayed herself therein.

GERAINT AND ENID.

O PURBLIND race of miserable men,
 How many among us at this very hour
 Do forge a life-long trouble for ourselves,
 855 By taking true for false, or false for true ;
 Here, thro' the feeble twilight of this world
 Groping, how many, until we pass and reach
 That other, where we see as we are seen !

So fared it with Geraint, who issuing forth
 860 That morning, when they both had got to horse,
 Perhaps because he loved her passionately,
 And felt that tempest brooding round his heart,
 Which, if he spoke at all, would break perforce
 Upon a head so dear, in thunder, said :
 865 ' Not at my side. I charge thee ride before,
 Ever a good way on before ; and this
 I charge thee, on thy duty as a wife,
 Whatever happens, not to speak to me,
 No, not a word ! ' and Enid was aghast ;
 870 And forth they rode, but scarce three paces on,
 When crying out, ' Effeminate as I am,
 I will not fight my way with gilded arms,
 All shall be iron ; ' he loosed a mighty purse,
 Hung at his belt, and hurl'd it toward the squire.
 875 So the last sight that Enid had of home
 Was all the marble threshold flashing, strown
 With gold and scatter'd coinage, and the squire
 Chafing his shoulder : then he cried again,
 ' To the wilds ! ' and Enid leading down the tracks
 380 Thro' which he bad her lead him on, they past

The marches, and by bandit-haunted holds,
 Gray swamps and pools, waste places of the hern,
 And wildernesses, perilous paths, they rode ;
 Round was their pace at first, but slackened soon :
 A stranger meeting them had surely thought, 885
 They rode so slowly and they looked so pale,
 That each had suffer'd some exceeding wrong.
 For he was ever saying to himself,
 ' O I that wasted time to tend upon her,
 To compass her with sweet observances, 890
 To dress her beautifully and keep her true—'
 And there he broke the sentence in his heart
 Abruptly, as a man upon his tongue
 May break it, when his passion masters him.
 And she was ever praying the sweet heavens 895
 To save her dear lord whole from any wound.
 And ever in her mind she cast about
 For that unnoticed failing in herself,
 Which made him look so cloudy and so cold ;
 Till the great plover's human whistle amazed 900
 Her heart, and glancing round the waste she fear'd
 In every wavering brake an ambuscade.
 Then thought again, ' If there be such in me,
 I might amend it by the grace of Heaven,
 If he would only speak and tell me of it.' 905

But when the fourth part of the day was gone,
 Then Enid was aware of three tall knights
 On horseback, wholly arm'd, behind a rock
 In shadow, waiting for them, caitiffs all ;
 And heard one crying to his fellow, ' Look, 910
 Here comes a laggard hanging down his head,
 Who seems no bolder than a beaten hound ;
 Come, we will slay him and will have his horse
 And armour, and his damsel shall be ours.'

915 Then Enid ponder'd in her heart, and said :
 'I will go back a little to my lord,
 And I will tell him all their caitiff talk ;
 For, be he wroth even to slaying me,
 Far liefer by his dear hand had I die,
920 Than that my lord should suffer loss or shame.'

 Then she went back some paces of return,
 Met his full frown timidly firm, and said ;
 'My lord, I saw three bandits by the rock
 Waiting to fall on you, and heard them boast
925 That they would slay you, and possess your horse
 And armour, and your damsel should be theirs.'

 He made a wrathful answer : ' Did I wish
 Your warning or your silence ? one command
 I laid upon you, not to speak to me,
930 And thus ye keep it ! Well then, look—for now,
 Whether ye wish me victory or defeat,
 Long for my life, or hunger for my death,
 Yourself shall see my vigour is not lost.'

 Then Enid waited pale and sorrowful,
935 And down upon him bare the bandit three.
 And at the midmost charging, Prince Geraint
 Drave the long spear a cubit thro' his breast
 And out beyond ; and then against his brace
 Of comrades, each of whom had broken on him
940 A lance that splinter'd like an icicle,
 Swung from his brand a windy buffet out
 Once, twice, to right, to left, and stunn'd the twain
 Or slew them, and dismounting like a man
 That skins the wild beast after slaying him,
945 Strip'd from the three dead wolves of woman born
 The three gay suits of armour which they wore,
 And let the bodies lie, but bound the suits

Of armour on their horses, each on each,
 And tied the bridle-reins of all the three
 Together, and said to her, 'Drive them on 950
 Before you ;' and she drove them thro' the waste.

He follow'd nearer : ruth began to work
 Against his anger in him, while he watch'd
 The being he loved best in all the world,
 With difficulty in mild obedience 955

Driving them on : he fain had spoken to her,
 And loosed in words of sudden fire the wrath
 And smoulder'd wrong that burnt him all within ;
 But evermore it seem'd an easier thing
 At once without remorse to strike her dead, 960

Than to cry 'Halt,' and to her own bright face
 Accuse her of the least immodesty :
 And thus tongue-tied, it made him wroth the more
 That she *could* speak whom his own ear had heard
 Call herself false : and suffering thus he made 965

Minutes an age : but in scarce longer time
 Than at Caerleon the full-tided Usk,
 Before he turn to fall seaward again,
 Pauses, did Enid, keeping watch, behold
 In the first shallow shade of a deep wood, 970

Before a gloom of stubborn-shafted oaks,
 Three other horsemen waiting, wholly arm'd,
 Whereof one seem'd far larger than her lord,
 And shook her pulses, crying, 'Look, a prize !
 Three horses and three goodly suits of arms, 975
 And all in charge of whom ? a girl : set on.'

'Nay,' said the second, 'yonder comes a knight.'
 The third, 'A craven ; how he hangs his head.'
 The giant answer'd merrily, 'Yea, but one ?
 Wait here, and when he passes fall upon him.' 980

And Enid ponder'd in her heart and said,
 'I will abide the coming of my lord,
 And I will tell him all their villainy.
 My lord is weary with the fight before,
 985 And they will fall upon him unawares.
 I needs must disobey him for his good ;
 How should I dare obey him to his harm ?
 Needs must I speak, and tho' he kill me for it,
 I save a life dearer to me than mine.'

990 And she abode his coming, and said to him
 With timid firmness, 'Have I leave to speak ?'
 He said, 'Ye take it, speaking,' and she spoke,

'There lurk three villains yonder in the wood,
 And each of them is wholly arm'd, and one
 Is larger-limb'd than you are, and they say
 995 That they will fall upon you while ye pass.'

To which he flung a wrathful answer back :
 'And if there were an hundred in the wood,
 And every man were larger-limb'd than I,
 1000 And all at once should sally out upon me,
 I swear it would not ruffle me so much
 As you that not obey me. Stand aside,
 And if I fall, cleave to the better man.'

And Enid stood aside to wait the event,
 1005 Not dare to watch the combat, only breathe
 Short fits of prayer, at every stroke a breath.
 And he, she dreaded most, bare down upon him.
 Aim'd at the helm, his lance err'd ; but Geraint's,
 A little in the late encounter strain'd,
 1010 Struck thro' the bulky bandit's corselet home,
 And then brake short, and down his enemy roll'd
 And there lay still ; as he that tells the tale

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Saw once a great piece of a promontory,
 That had a sapling growing on it, slide
 From the long shore-cliff's windy walls to the beach, 1015
 And there lie still, and yet the sapling grew :
 So lay the man transfixt. His craven pair
 Of comrades making slower at the Prince,
 When now they saw their bulwark fallen, stood ;
 On whom the victor, to confound them more, 1020
 Spurr'd with his terrible war cry ; for as one,
 That listens near a torrent mountain-brook,
 All thro' the crash of the near cataract hears
 The drumming thunder of the huger fall
 At distance, were the soldiers wont to hear 1025
 His voice in battle, and be kindled by it,
 And foeman scared, like that false pair who turn'd
 Flying, but, overtaken, died the death
 Themselves had wrought on many an innocent.

Thereon Geraint, dismounting, pick'd the lance 1030
 That pleased him best, and drew from those dead wolves
 Their three gay suits of armour, each from each,
 And bound them on their horses, each on each,
 And tied the bridle-reins of all the three
 Together, and said to her, ' Drive them on
 Before you,' and she drove them thro' the wood. 1035

He follow'd nearer still : the pain she had
 To keep them in the wild ways of the wood,
 Two sets of three laden with jingling arms,
 Together, served a little to disedge 1040
 The sharpness of that pain about her heart,
 And they themselves, like creatures gently born
 But into bad hands fall'n, and now so long
 By bandits groom'd, prick'd their light ears, and felt
 Her low firm voice and tender government. 1045

- So thro' the green gloom of the wood they past,
And issuing under open heavens beheld
A little town with towers, upon a rock,
And close beneath, a meadow gem-like chased
1050 In the brown wild, and mowers mowing in it :
And down a rocky pathway from the place
There came a fair-haired youth, that in his hand
Bare victual for the mowers : and Geraint
Had ruth again on Enid looking pale :
1055 Then, moving downward to the meadow ground,
He, when the fair-hair'd youth came by him, said,
' Friend, let her eat ; the damsel is so faint.'
' Yea, willingly,' replied the youth, ' and thou,
My Lord, eat also, tho' the fare is coarse,
1060 And only meet for mowers ;' then set down
His basket, and dismounting on the sward
They let the horses graze, and ate themselves.
And Enid took a little delicately,
Less having stomach for it than desire
1065 To close with her lord's pleasure ; but Geraint
Ate all the mowers' victual unawares,
And when he found all empty, was amazed ;
And ' Boy,' said he, ' I have eaten all, but take
A horse and arms for guerdon ; choose the best.'
1070 He, reddening in extremity of delight,
' My lord, you overpay me fifty-fold.'
' Ye will be all the wealthier,' cried the Prince.
' I take it as free gift, then,' said the boy,
' Not guerdon ; for myself can easily,
1075 While your good damsel rests, return, and fetch
Fresh victual for these mowers of our Earl ;
For these are his, and all the field is his,
And I myself am his ; and I will tell him
How great a man thou art : he loves to know
1080 When men of mark are in his territory :

And he will have thee to his palace here,
And serve thee costlier than with mowers' fare.'

Then said Geraint, 'I wish no better fare :
I never ate with angrier appetite
Than when I left your mowers dinnerless. 1085
And into no Earl's palace will I go.
I know, God knows, too much of palaces !
And if he want me, let him come to me,
But hire us some fair chamber for the night,
And stalling for the horses, and return 1090
With victual for these men, and let us know.'

'Yea, my kind lord,' said the glad youth, and went,
Held his head high, and thought himself a knight,
And up the rocky pathway disappear'd,
Leading the horse, and they were left alone. 1095

But when the Prince had brought his errant eyes
Home from the rock, sideways he let them glance
At Enid, where she droopt : his own false doom,
That shadow of mistrust should never cross
Betwixt them, came upon him, and he sigh'd ; 1100
Then with another humorous ruth remark'd
The lusty mowers labouring dinnerless,
And watch'd the sun blaze on the turning scythe,
And after nodded sleepily in the heat.
But she, remembering her old ruin'd hall, 1105
And all the windy clamour of the daws
About her hollow turret, pluck'd the grass
There growing longest by the meadow's edge,
And into many a listless annulet,
Now over, now beneath her marriage ring, 1110
Wove and unwove it, till the boy return'd
And told them of a chamber, and they went ;
Where, after saying to her, ' If ye will,

- 1115 Call for the woman of the house, to which
 She answer'd, 'Thanks, my lord;' the two remain'd
 Apart by all the chamber's width, and mute
 As creatures voiceless thro' the fault of birth,
 Or two wild men supporters of a shield,
 Painted, who stare at open space, nor glance
 1120 The one at other, parted by the shield.

- On a sudden, many a voice along the street,
 And heel against the pavement echoing, burst
 Their drowse; and either started while the door,
 Push'd from without, drave backward to the wall,
 1125 And midmost of a rout of roisterers,
 Femininely fair and dissolutely pale,
 Her suitor in old years before Geraint,
 Enter'd, the wild lord of the place, Limours.
 He moving up with pliant courtliness,
 1130 Greeted Geraint full face, but stealthily,
 In the mid-warmth of welcome, and graspt hand,
 Found Enid with the corner of his eye,
 And knew her sitting sad and solitary.
 Then cried Geraint for wine and goodly cheer
 1135 To feed the sudden guest, and sumptuously
 According to his fashion, bad the host
 Call in what men soever were his friends,
 And feast with these in honour of their Earl;
 'And care not for the cost; the cost is mine.'
 1140 And wine and food were brought, and Earl Limours
 Drank till he jested with all ease, and told
 Free tales, and took the word and play'd upon it,
 And made it of two colours; for his talk,
 When wine and free companions kindled him,
 1145 Was wont to glance and sparkle like a gem
 Of fifty facets; thus he moved the Prince
 To laughter and his comrades to applause.

Then, when the Prince was merry, ask'd Limours,
 'Your leave, my lord, to cross the room, and speak
 To your good damsel there who sits apart, 1150
 And seems so lonely?' 'My free leave,' he said;
 'Get her to speak: she doth not speak to me.'
 Then rose Limours, and looking at his feet,
 Like him who tries the bridge he fears may fail,
 Crost and came near, lifted adoring eyes, 1155
 Bow'd at her side and utter'd whisperingly:

'Enid, the pilot star of my lone life,
 Enid, my early and my only love,
 Enid, the loss of whom hath turn'd me wild—
 What chance is this? how is it I see you here? 1160
 Ye are in my power at last, are in my power.
 Yet fear me not: I call mine own self wild,
 But keep a touch of sweet civility
 Here in the heart of waste and wilderness.
 I thought, but that your father came between, 1165
 In former days you saw me favourably.
 And if it were so do not keep it back:
 Make me a little happier: let me know it:
 Owe you me nothing for a life half-lost?
 Yea, yea, the whole dear debt of all you are. 1170
 And, Enid, you and he, I see with joy,
 Ye sit apart, you do not speak to him,
 You come with no attendance, page or maid,
 To serve you—doth he love you as of old?
 For, call it lovers' quarrels, yet I know 1175
 Tho' men may bicker with the things they love,
 They would not make them laughable in all eyes,
 Not while they loved them; and your wretched dress,
 A wretched insult on you, dumbly speaks
 Your story, that this man loves you no more. 1180
 Your beauty is no beauty to him now:

- A common chance—right well I know it—pall'd—
 For I know men: nor will ye win him back,
 For the man's love once gone, never returns.
 1185 But here is one who loves you as of old;
 With more exceeding passion than of old:
 Good, speak the word: my followers ring him round:
 He sits unarm'd; I hold a finger up;
 They understand: nay; I do not mean blood:
 1190 Nor need ye look so scared at what I say:
 My malice is no deeper than a moat,
 No stronger than a wall: there is the keep;
 He shall not cross us more; speak but the word:
 Or speak it not; but then by Him that made me
 1195 The one true lover whom you ever own'd,
 I will make use of all the power I have.
 O pardon me! the madness of that hour,
 When first I parted from thee, moves me yet.'

- At this the tender sound of his own voice
 1200 And sweet self-pity, or the fancy of it,
 Made his eye moist; But Enid fear'd his eyes,
 Moist as they were, wine-heated from the feast;
 And answer'd with such craft as women use,
 Guilty or guiltless, to stave off a chance
 1205 That breaks upon them perilously, and said:

'Earl, if you love me as in former years,
 And do not practise on me, come with morn,
 And snatch me from him as by violence;
 Leave me to-night: I am weary to the death.'

- 1210 Low at leave-taking, with his brandish'd plume,
 Brushing his instep, bow'd the all-amorous Earl,
 And the stout Prince bad him a loud good-night.
 He moving homeward babbled to his men,

How Enid never loved a man but him,
Nor cared a broken egg-shell for her lord. 1215

But Enid left alone with Prince Geraint,
Debating his command of silence given,
And that she now perforce must violate it,
Held commune with herself, and while she held
He fell asleep, and Enid had no heart 1220
To wake him, but hung o'er him, wholly pleased
To find him yet unwounded after fight,
And hear him breathing low and equally.

Anon she rose, and stepping lightly, heap'd
The pieces of his armour in one place, 1225
All to be there against a sudden need ;
Then dozed awhile herself, but overtoil'd
By that day's grief and travel, evermore
Seem'd catching at a rootless thorn, and then
Went slipping down horrible precipices, 1230

And strongly striking out her limbs awoke ;
Then thought she heard the wild Earl at the door,
With all his rout of random followers,
Sound on a dreadful trumpet, summoning her ;
Which was the red cock shouting to the light, 1235
As the gray dawn stole o'er the dewy world,
And glimmer'd on his armour in the room.

And once again she rose to look at it,
But touch'd it unawares : jangling, the casque
Fell, and he started up and stared at her. 1240

Then breaking his command of silence given,
She told him all that Earl Limours had said,
Except the passage that he loved her not ;
Nor left untold the craft herself had used ;
But ended with apology so sweet, 1245
Low-spoken, and of so few words, and seem'd
So justified by that necessity,

- 1250 That tho' he thought 'was it for him she wept
In Devon?' he but gave a wrathful groan,
Saying 'Your sweet faces make good fellows fools
And traitors. Call the host and bid him bring
Charger and palfrey.' So she glided out
- 1255 Among the heavy breathings of the house,
And like a household Spirit at the walls
Beat, till she woke the sleepers, and returned:
Then tending her rough lord, tho' all unask'd,
In silence, did him service as a squire;
- 1260 Till issuing arm'd he found the host and cried,
'Thy reckoning, friend?' and, ere he learnt it, 'Take
Five horses and their armours;' and the host
Suddenly honest, answer'd in amaze,
'My lord, I scarce have spent the worth of one!'
- 1265 'Ye will be all the wealthier,' said the prince,
And then to Enid, 'Forward! and to-day
I charge you, Enid, more especially,
What thing soever ye may hear, or see,
Or fancy (tho' I count it of small use
- 1270 To charge you) that ye speak not but obey,'

- And Enid answer'd, 'Yea, my lord, I know
Your wish, and would obey; but riding first,
I hear the violent threats you do not hear,
I see the danger which you can not see:
- 1275 Then not to give you warning, that seems hard;
Almost beyond me: yet I would obey.'
- 'Yea so,' said he, 'do it: be not too wise;
Seeing that ye are wedded to a man,
Not all mismated with a yawning clown,
- 1280 But one with arms to guard his head and yours,
With eyes to find you out however far,
And ears to hear you even in his dreams.'

With that he turn'd and look'd as keenly at her

As careful robins eye the delver's toil ;
 And that within her, which a wanton fool, 1285
 Or hasty judger would have call'd her guilt,
 Made her cheek burn and either eyelid fall.
 And Geraint look'd and was not satisfied.

Then forward by a way which, beaten broad,
 Led from the territory of false Limours 1290
 To the waste earldom of another earl,
 Doorm, whom his shaking vassals call'd the Bull,
 Went Enid with her sullen follower on.

Once she look'd back, and when she saw him ride
 More near by many a rood than yestermorn, 1295
 It wellnigh made her cheerful ; till Geraint
 Waving an angry hand as who should say

'Ye watch me,' sadden'd all her heart again.
 But while the sun yet beat a dewy blade,
 The sound of many a heavily-galloping hoof 1300
 Smote on her ear, and turning round she saw
 Dust, and the points of lances bicker in it.

Then not to disobey her lord's behest,
 And yet to give him warning, for he rode
 As if he heard not, moving back she held 1305
 Her finger up, and pointed to the dust.

At which the warrior in his obstinacy,
 Because she kept the letter of his word,
 Was in a manner pleased, and turning, stood.
 And in the moment after, wild Limours, 1310

Borne on a black horse, like a thunder-cloud
 Whose skirts are loosen'd by the breaking storm,
 Half ridden off with by the thing he rode,
 And all in passion uttering a dry shriek,
 Dash'd on Geraint, who closed with him, and bore 1315
 Down by the length of lance and arm beyond
 The crupper, and so left him stunn'd or dead,

And overthrew the next that follow'd him,
And blindly rush'd on all the rout behind.
1320 But at the flash and motion of the man
They vanish'd panic-stricken, like a shoal
Of darting fish, that on a summer morn
Adown the crystal dykes at Camelot
Come slipping o'er their shadows on the sand,
1325 But if a man who stands upon the brink
But lift a shining hand against the sun,
There is not left the twinkle of a fin
Betwixt the cressy islets white in flower ;
So, scared but at the motion of the man,
1330 Fled all the boon companions of the Earl,
And left him lying in the public way ;
So vanish friendships only made in wine.

Then like a stormy sunlight smiled Geraint,
Who saw the chargers of the two that fell
1335 Start from their fallen lords, and wildly fly,
Mixt with the flyers. 'Horse and man,' he said,
'All of one mind and all right-honest friends !
Not a hoof left : and I methinks till now
Was honest—paid with horses and with arms ;
1340 I cannot steal or plunder, no nor beg :
And so what say ye, shall we strip him there
Your lover ? has your palfrey heart enough
To bear his armour ? shall we fast, or dine ?
No ?—then do thou, being right honest, pray
1345 That we meet the horsemen of Earl Doorm,
I too would still be honest.' Thus he said :
And sadly gazing on her bridle-reins,
And answering not one word, she led the way.

But as a man to whom a dreadful loss
1350 Falls in a far land and he knows it not,

But coming back he learns it, and the loss
 So pains him that he sickens nigh to death ;
 So fared it with Geraint, who being prick'd
 In combat with the follower of Limours,
 Bled underneath his armour secretly, 1355
 And so rode on, nor told his gentle wife
 What a'il'd him, hardly knowing it himself,
 Till his eye darken'd, and his helmet wagg'd ;
 And at a sudden swerving of the road,
 Tho' happily down on a bank of grass, 1360
 The Prince, without a word, from his horse fell.

And Enid heard the clashing of his fall,
 Suddenly came, and at his side all pale
 Dismounting, loosed the fastenings of his arms,
 Nor let her true hand falter, nor blue eye 1365
 Moisten, till she had lighted on his wound,
 And tearing off her veil of faded silk
 Had bared her forehead to the blistering sun,
 And swathed the hurt that drain'd her dear lord's life.
 Then after all was done that hand could do, 1370
 She rested, and her desolation came
 Upon her, and she wept beside the way.

And many past, but none regarded her,
 For in that realm of lawless turbulence,
 A woman weeping for her murder'd mate 1375
 Was cared as much for as a summer shower :
 One took him for a victim of Earl Doorm,
 Nor dared to waste a perilous pity on him :
 Another hurrying past, a man-at-arms,
 Rode on a mission to the bandit Earl ; 1380
 Half whistling and half singing a coarse song,
 He drove the dust against her veiless eyes :
 Another, flying from the wrath of Doorm

Before an ever-fancied arrow, made
 1335 The long way smoke beneath him in his fear ;
 At which her palfrey whinnying lifted heel,
 And scour'd into the coppices and was lost,
 While the great charger stood, grieved like a man.

But at the point of noon the huge Earl Doorm,
 1390 Broad-faced with under-fringe of russet beard,
 Bound on a foray, rolling eyes of prey,
 Came riding with a hundred lances up ;
 But ere he came, like one that hails a ship,
 Cried out with a big voice, 'What, is he dead ?'
 1395 'No, no, not dead !' she answer'd in all haste.
 'Would some of your kind people take him up,
 And bear him hence out of this cruel sun ?
 Most sure am I, quite sure, he is not dead.'

Then said Earl Doorm : 'Well, if he be not dead,
 1400 Why wail ye for him thus ? ye seem a child.
 And be he dead, I count you for a fool ;
 Your wailing will not quicken him : dead or not,
 Ye mar a comely face with idiot tears.
 Yet, since the face *is* comely—some of you,
 1405 Here, take him up, and bear him to our hall,
 An if he live, we will have him of our band ;
 And if he die, why earth has earth enough
 To hide him. See ye take the charger too,
 A noble one.'

1410 He spake, and past away,
 But left two brawny spearmen, who advanced,
 Each growling like a dog, when his good bone
 Seems to be pluck'd at by the village boys
 Who love to vex him eating, and he fears
 1415 To lose his bone, and lays his foot upon it,
 Gnawing and growling : so the ruffians growl'd,

Fearing to lose, and all for a dead man,
 Their chance of booty from the morning's raid,
 Yet raised and laid him on a litter-bier,
 Such as they brought upon their forays out 1420
 For those that might be wounded ; laid him on it
 All in the hollow of his shield, and took
 And bore him to the naked hal' of Doorm,
 (His gentle charger following him unled)
 And cast him and the bier in which he lay 1425
 Down on an oaken settle in the hall,
 And then departed, hot in haste to join
 Their luckier mates, but growling as before,
 And cursing their lost time, and the dead man,
 And their own Earl, and their own souls, and her. 1430
 They might as well have blest her, she was deaf
 To blessing or to cursing save from one.

So for long hours sat Enid by her lord,
 There in the naked hall, propping his head,
 And chafing his pale hands, and calling to him. 1435
 Till at the last he waken'd from his swoon,
 And found his own dear bride propping his head,
 And chafing his faint hands, and calling to him ;
 And felt the warm tears falling on his face ;
 And said to his own heart, 'She weeps for me : ' 1440
 And yet lay still, and feign'd himself as dead,
 That he might prove her to the uttermost,
 And say to his own heart, 'She weeps for me.'

But in the falling afternoon return'd
 The huge Earl Doorm with plunder to the hall. 1445
 His lusty spearmen follow'd him with noise :
 Each hurling down a heap of things that rang
 Against the pavement, cast his lance aside,
 And doff'd his helm : and then there flutter'd in,

- 1450 Half-bold, half-frighted, with dilated eyes,
A tribe of women, dress'd in many hues,
And mingled with the spearmen : and Earl Doorm
Struck with a knife's haft hard against the board,
And call'd for flesh and wine to feed his spears.
- 1455 And men brought in whole hogs and quarter beeves,
And all the hall was dim with steam of flesh ;
And none spake word, but all sat down at once,
And ate with tumult in the naked hall,
Feeding like horses when you hear them feed ;
- 1460 Till Enid shrank far back into herself,
To shun the wild ways of the lawless tribe.
But when Earl Doorm had eaten all he would,
He roll'd his eyes about the hall, and found
A damsel drooping in a corner of it.
- 1465 Then he remember'd her, and how she wept ;
And out of her there came a power upon him ;
And rising on the sudden he said, ' Eat !
I never yet beheld a thing so pale.
God's curse, it makes me mad to see you weep.
- 1470 Eat ! Look yourself. Good luck had your good man,
For were I dead who is it would weep for me ?
Sweet lady, never since I first drew breath
Have I beheld a lily like yourself.
And so there lived some colour in your cheek,
- 1475 There is not one among my gentlewomen
Were fit to wear your slipper for a glove.
But listen to me, and by me be ruled,
And I will do the thing I have not done,
For ye shall share my earldom with me, girl,
- 1480 And we will live like two birds in one nest,
And I will fetch you forage from all fields,
For I compel all creatures to my will.'

He spoke : the brawny spearman let his cheek

Bulge with the unswallow'd piece, and turning stared ;
 While some, whose souls the old serpent long had drawn 1485
 Down, as the worm draws in the wither'd leaf
 And makes it earth, hiss'd each at other's ear
 What shall not be recorded—women they,
 Women, or what had been those gracious things,
 But now desired the humbling of their best, 1490
 Yea, would have help'd him to it : and all at once
 They hated her, who took no thought of them,
 But answer'd in low voice, her meek head yet
 Drooping, 'I pray you of your courtesies,
 He being as he is, to let me be.' 1495

She spake so low he hardly heard her speak,
 But like a mighty patron, satisfied
 With what himself had done so graciously,
 Assumed, that she had thank'd him, adding, 'Yea,
 Eat and be glad, for I account you mine.' 1500

She answer'd meekly, 'How should I be glad
 Henceforth in all the world at anything,
 Until my lord arise and look upon me?'

Here the huge Earl cried out upon her talk, 1505
 As all but empty heart and weariness
 And sickly nothing ; suddenly seized on her,
 And bare her by main violence to the board,
 And thrust the dish before her, crying, 'Eat.'

'No, no,' said Enid, vext, 'I will not eat 1510
 Till yonder man upon the bier arise,
 And eat with me.' 'Drink, then,' he answer'd. 'Here!'
 (And fill'd a horn with wine and held it to her,)
 'Lo! I, myself, when flush'd with fight, or hot,
 God's curse, with anger—often I myself, 1515
 Before I well have drunken, scarce can eat :

Drink therefore and the wine will change your will."

1520 'Not so,' she cried, 'by Heaven, I will not drink
Till my dear lord arise and bid me do it,
And drink with me; and if he rise no more,
I will not look at wine until I die.'

1525 At this he turn'd all red and paced his hall,
Now gnaw'd his under, now his upper lip,
And coming up close to her, said at last :
'Girl, for I see ye scorn my courtesies,
Take warning : yonder man is surely dead ;
And I compel all creatures to my will.
Not eat nor drink ? And wherefore wail for one,
Who put your beauty to this flout and scorn
1530 By dressing it in rags ? Amazed am I,
Beholding how ye butt against my wish,
That I forbear you thus : cross me no more.
At least put off to please me this poor gown,
This silken rag, this beggar-woman's weed :
1535 I love that beauty should go beautifully :
For see ye not my gentlewomen here,
How gay, how suited to the house of one
Who loves that beauty should go beautifully ?
Rise therefore ; robe yourself in this : obey.'

1540 He spoke, and one among his gentlewomen
Display'd a splendid silk of foreign loom,
Where like a shoaling sea, the lovely blue
Flay'd into green, and thicker down the front
With jewels than the sward with drops of dew,
1545 When all night long a cloud clings to the hill,
And with the dawn ascending lets the day
Strike where it clung : so thickly shone the gems.

But Enid answer'd, harder to be moved
Than hardest tyrants in their day of power,

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With life-long injuries burning unavenged, 1550
And now their hour has come ; and Enid said :

‘ In this poor gown my dear lord found me first,
And loved me serving in my father’s hall :
In this poor gown I rode with him to court,
And there the Queen array’d me like the sun : 1555
In this poor gown he bad me clothe myself,
When now we rode upon this fatal quest
Of honour, where no honour can be gain’d :
And this poor gown I will not cast aside
Until himself arise a living man, 1560
And bid me cast it. I have griefs enough :
Pray you be gentle, pray you let me be :
I never loved, can never love but him :
Yea, God, I pray you of your gentleness,
He being as he is, to let me be.’ 1565

Then strode the brute Earl up and down his hall,
And took his russet beard between his teeth ;
Last, coming up quite close, and in his mood
Crying, ‘ I count it of no more avail,
Dame, to be gentle than ungentle with you ;
Take my salute,’ unknighly with flat hand, 1570
However lightly, smote her on the cheek.

Then Enid, in her utter helplessness,
And since she thought, ‘ He had not dared to do it,
Except he surely knew my lord was dead,’
Sent forth a sudden sharp and bitter cry, 1575
As of a wild thing taken in the trap,
Which sees the trapper coming thro’ the wood.

This heard Geraint, and grasping at his sword,
(It lay beside him in the hollow shield),

1580 Made but a single bound, and with a sweep of it
 Shore thro' the swarthy neck, and like a ball
 The russet-bearded head roll'd on the floor,
 So died Earl Doorm by him he counted dead.
 And all the men and women in the hall
 1585 Rose when they saw the dead man rise, and fled
 Yelling as from a spectre, and the two
 Were left alone together, and he said :

 ' Enid, I have used you worse than that dead man ;
 Done you more wrong : we both have undergone
 1590 That trouble which has left me thrice your own :
 Henceforward I will rather die than doubt,
 And here I lay this penance on myself.
 Not, tho' mine own ears heard you yesternorn—
 You thought me sleeping, but I heard you say,
 1595 I heard you say, that you were no true wife ;
 I swear I will not ask your meaning in it :
 I do believe yourself against yourself,
 And will henceforward rather die than doubt.'

 And Enid could not say one tender word,
 1600 She felt so blunt and stupid at the heart :
 She only pray'd him, ' Fly, they will return
 And slay you ; fly, your charger is without,
 My palfrey lost.' ' Then, Enid, shall you ride
 Behind me.' ' Yea,' said Enid, ' let us go.'
 1605 And moving out they found the stately horse.
 Who now no more a vassal to the thief,
 But free to stretch his limbs in lawful fight,
 Neigh'd with all gladness as they came, and stoop'd
 With a low whinny toward the pair : and she
 1610 Kiss'd the white star upon his noble front,
 Glad also ; then Geraint upon the horse
 Mounted, and reach'd a hand, and on his foot

She set her own and climb'd ; he turn'd his face
And kiss'd her climbing, and she cast her arms
About him, and at once they rode away.

1615

And never yet, since high in Paradise
O'er the four rivers the first roses blew,
Came purer pleasure unto mortal kind
Than lived thro' her, who in that perilous hour
Put hand to hand beneath her husband's heart,
And felt him hers again : she did not weep,
But o'er her meek eyes came a happy mist
Like that which kept the heart of Eden green
Before the useful trouble of the rain :

1620

Yet not so misty were her meek blue eyes
As not to see before them on the path,
Right in the gateway of the bandit hold,
A knight of Arthur's court, who laid his lance
In rest, and made as if to fall upon him.
Then, fearing for his hurt and loss of blood,
She, with her mind all full of what had chanced,
Shriek'd to the stranger 'Slay not a dead man !'
'The voice of Enid,' said the knight ; but she,
Beholding it was Edyrn son of Nudd,
Was moved so much the more, and shriek'd again,
'O cousin, slay not him who gave you life.'
And Edyrn moving frankly forward spake :
'My lord Geraint, I greet you with all love ;
I took you for a bandit knight of Doorm ;
And fear not, Enid, I should fall upon him,
Who love you, Prince, with something of the love
Wherewith we love the Heaven that chastens us.
For once, when I was up so high in pride
That I was halfway down the slope to Hell,
By overthrowing me you threw me higher.
Now, made a knight of Arthur's Table Round,

1625

1630

1635

1640

1645

And since I knew this Earl, when I myself
 Was half a bandit in my lawless hour,
 I come the mouthpiece of our King to Doorm
 1650 (The King is close behind me) bidding him
 Disband himself, and scatter all his powers,
 Submit, and hear the judgment of the King.'

'He hears the judgment of the King of kings,'
 Cried the wan Prince; 'and lo, the powers of Doorm
 1655 Are scatter'd,' and he pointed to the field,
 Where, huddled here and there on mound and knoll,
 Were men and women staring and aghast,
 While some yet fled; and then he plainlier told
 How the huge Earl lay slain within his hall.
 1660 But when the knight besought him, 'Follow me,
 Prince, to the camp, and in the King's own ear
 Speak what has chanced; ye surely have endured
 Strange chances here alone;' that other flush'd,
 And hung his head, and halted in reply,
 1665 Fearing the mild face of the blameless King,
 And after madness acted question ask'd:
 Till Edyrn crying, 'If ye will not go
 To Arthur, then will Arthur come to you,'
 'Enough,' he said, 'I follow,' and they went.
 1670 But Enid in their going had two fears,
 One from the bandit scatter'd in the field,
 And one from Edyrn. Every now and then,
 When Edyrn rein'd his charger at her side,
 She shrank a little. In a hollow land,
 1675 From which old fires have broken, men may fear
 Fresh fire and ruin. He, perceiving, said:

'Fair and dear cousin, you that most had cause
 To fear me, fear no longer, I am changed.
 Yourself were first the blameless cause to make

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My nature's prideful sparkle in the blood 1680
 Break into furious flame ; being repulsed
 By Yniol and yourself, I schemed and wrought
 Until I overturn'd him ; then set up
 (With one main purpose ever at my heart)
 My haughty jousts, and took a paramour ; 1685
 Did her mock-honour as the fairest fair,
 And, toppling over all antagonism,
 So wax'd in pride, that I believed myself
 Unconquerable, for I was wellnigh mad :
 And, but for my main purpose in these jousts, 1690
 I should have slain your father, seized yourself.
 I lived in hope that sometime you would come,
 To these my lists with him whom best you loved ;
 And there, poor cousin, with your meek blue eyes,
 The truest eyes that ever answer'd Heaven, 1695
 Behold me overturn and trample on him.
 Then, had you cried, or knelt, or pray'd to me,
 I should not less have kill'd him. And you came,—
 But once you came,—and with your own true eyes
 Beheld the man you loved (I speak as one 1700
 Speaks of a service done him) overthrow
 My proud self, and my purpose three years old,
 And set his foot upon me, and give me life.
 There was I broken down ; there was I saved :
 Tho' thence I rode all-shamed, hating the life 1705
 He gave me, meaning to be rid of it.
 And all the penance the Queen laid upon me
 Was but to rest awhile within her court ;
 Where first as sullen as a beast new-caged,
 And waiting to be treated like a wolf, 1710
 Because I knew my deeds were known, I found,
 Instead of scornful pity or pure scorn,
 Such fine reserve and noble reticence,
 Manners so kind, yet stately, such a grace

- 1715 Of tenderest courtesy, that I began
 To glance behind me at my former life,
 And find that it had been the wolf's indeed :
 And oft I talk'd with Dubric, the high saint,
 Who, with mild heat of holy oratory,
 1720 Subdued me somewhat to that gentleness,
 Which, when it weds with manhood, makes a man.
 And you were often there about the Queen,
 But saw me not, or mark'd not if you saw ;
 Nor did I care or dare to speak with you,
 1725 But kept myself aloof till I was changed ;
 And fear not, cousin ; I am changed indeed.'

- He spoke, and Enid easily believed,
 Like simple noble natures, credulous
 Of what they long for, good in friend or foe,
 1730 There most in those who most have done them ill.
 And when they reach'd the camp the King himself
 Advanced to greet them, and beholding her
 Tho' pale, yet happy, ask'd her not a word,
 But went apart with Edyrn, whom he held
 1735 In converse for a little, and return'd,
 And, gravey smiling, lifted her from horse,
 And kiss'd her with all pureness, brotherlike,
 And show'd an empty tent allotted her,
 And glancing for a minute, till he saw her
 1740 Pass into it, turn'd to the Prince, and said :

- 'Prince, when of late ye pray'd me for my leave
 To move to your own land, and there defend
 Your marches, I was prick'd with some reproof,
 As one that let foul wrong stagnate and be,
 1745 By having look'd too much thro' alien eyes,
 And wrought too long with delegated hands,
 Not used mine own : but now behold me come

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To cleanse this common sewer of all my realm,
 With Edyrn and with others : have ye look'd
 At Edyrn ? have ye seen how nobly changed ? 1750
 This work of his is great and wonderful.
 His very face with change of heart is changed.
 The world will not believe a man repents :
 And this wise world of ours is mainly right.
 Full seldom doth a man repent, or use 1755
 Both grace and will to pick the vicious quitch
 Of blood and custom wholly out of him,
 And make all clean, and plant himself afresh.
 Edyrn has done it, weeding all his heart
 As I will weed this land before I go.
 I, therefore, made him of our Table Round, 1760
 Not rashly, but have proved him everyway
 One of our noblest, our most valorous,
 Sanest and most obedient : and indeed
 This work of Edyrn wrought upon himself
 After a life of violence, seems to me 1765
 A thousand-fold more great and wonderful
 Than if some knight of mine, risking his life,
 My subject with my subjects under him,
 Should make an onslaught single on a realm
 Of robbers, tho' he slew them one by one, 1770
 And were himself nigh wounded to the death.'

So spake the King ; low bow'd the Prince, and felt
 His work was neither great nor wonderful,
 And past to Enid's tent ; and thither came
 The King's own leech to look into his hurt ; 1775
 And Enid tended on him there ; and there
 Her constant motion round him, and the breath
 Of her sweet tendance hovering over him,
 Fill'd all the genial courses of his blood
 With deeper and with ever deeper love, 1780

As the south-west that blowing Bala lake
Fills all the sacred Dee. So past the days.

But while Geraint lay healing of his hurt,
The blameless King went forth and cast his eyes
1785 On each of all whom Uther left in charge
Long since, to guard the justice of the King :
He look'd and found them wanting ; and as now
Men weed the white horse on the Berkshire hills
To keep him bright and clean as heretofore,
1790 He rooted out the slothful officer
Or guilty, which for bribe had wink'd at wrong,
And in their chairs set up a stronger race
With hearts and hands, and sent a thousand men
To till the wastes, and moving everywhere
1795 Clear'd the dark places and let in the law,
And broke the bandit holds and cleansed the land.

Then, when Geraint was whole again, they past
With Arthur to Caerleon upon Usk.
There the great Queen once more embraced her friend,
1800 And clothed her in apparel like the day.
And tho' Geraint could never take again
That comfort from their converse which he took
Before the Queen's fair name was breathed upon,
He rested well content that all was well.
1805 Thence after tarrying for a space they rode,
And fifty knights rode with them to the shores
Of Severn, and they past to their own land.
And there he kept the justice of the King
So vigorously yet mildly, that all hearts
1810 Applauded, and the spiteful whisper died :
And being ever foremost in the chase,
And victor at the tilt and tournament,
They call'd him the great Prince and man of men.

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But Enid, whom her ladies loved to call
Enid the Fair, a grateful people named 1815
Enid the Good ; and in their halls arose
The cry of children, Enids and Geraints
Of times to be ; nor did he doubt her more,
But rested in her fēalty, till he crown'd
A happy life with a fair death, and fell 1820
Against the heathen of the Northern Sea
In battle, fighting for the blameless King.

THE REVENGE.

A BALLAD OF THE FLEET.

I.

AT FLORES in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,
 And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird, came flying from far
 away :
 'Spanish ships of war at sea ! we have sighted fifty-three !'
 Then sware Lord Thomas Howard : 'Fore God I am no
 coward ;
 5 But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of gear,
 And the half my men are sick. I must fly, but follow quick.
 We are six ships of the line ; can we fight with fifty-three ?'

II.

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville : 'I know you are no coward ;
 You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.
 10 But I've ninety men and more that are lying sick ashore,
 I should count myself the coward if I left them, my Lord
 Howard,
 To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain.'

III.

So Lord Howard past away with five ships of war that day,
 Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer heaven ;
 15 But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from the land
 Very carefully and slow,
 Men of Bideford in Devon,
 And we laid them on the ballast down below ;
 For we brought them all aboard,

And they blest him in their pain, that they were not left to 20
Spain,
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the glory of the Lord.

IV.

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to fight,
And he sailed away from Flores till the Spaniard came in
sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather bow.
'Shall we fight or shall we fly?' 25
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
For to fight is but to die!
There'll be little of us left by the time this sun be set.'
And Sir Richard said again: 'We be all good English men.
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the devil. 30
For I never turn'd my back upon Don or devil yet.'

V.

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and we roar'd a hurrah,
and so
The little Revenge ran on sheer into the heart of the foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick below;
For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left were 35
seen,
And the little Revenge ran on thro' the long sea-lane between

VI.

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down from their decks and
laugh'd,
Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad little craft
Running on and on, till delay'd
By their mountain-like San Philip that, of fifteen hundred 40
tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with her yawning tiers of
guns,

Took the breath from our sails, and we stay'd.

VII.

And while now the great San Philip hung above us like a
cloud

Whence the thunderbolt will fall

45 Long and loud,

Four galleons drew away

From the Spanish fleet that day,

And two upon the larboard and two upon the starboard lay,

And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

VIII.

50 But anon the great San Philip, she bethought herself and
went

Having that within her womb that had left her ill content ;

And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought us hand to
hand,

For a dozen times they came with their pikes and musqueteers,

And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that shakes his
ears

55 When he leaps from the water to the land.

IX.

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over the
summer sea,

But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the fifty-
three.

Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built galleons
came,

Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-thunder
and flame ;

60 Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her dead
and her shame.

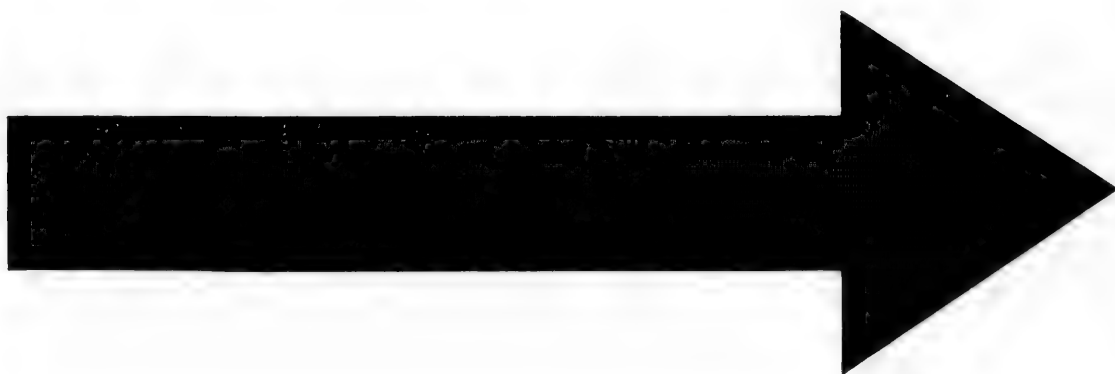
For some were sunk and many were shatter'd, and so could
 fight us no more—
 God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the world
 before?

X.

For he said 'Fight on! fight on!'
 Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck;
 And it chanced that, when half of the short summer night 65
 was gone,
 With a grisly wound to be drest he had left the deck,
 But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly dead,
 And himself he was wounded again in the side and the head,
 And he said 'Fight on! fight on!'

XI.

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far over the 70
 summer sea,
 And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round us all in a
 ring;
 But they dared not touch us again, for they fear'd that we still
 could sting,
 So they watch'd what the end would be.
 And we had not fought them in vain,
 But in perilous plight were we, 75
 Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,
 And half of the rest of us maim'd for life
 In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate strife;
 And the sick men down in the hold were most of them stark
 and cold,
 And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder was all 80
 of it spent;
 And the masts and the rigging were lying over the side;
 But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,



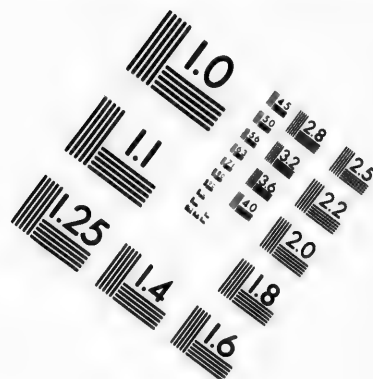
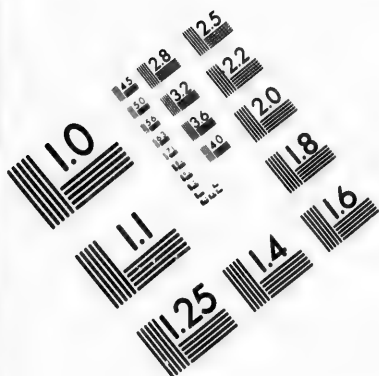
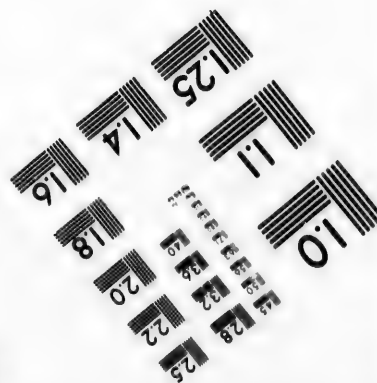
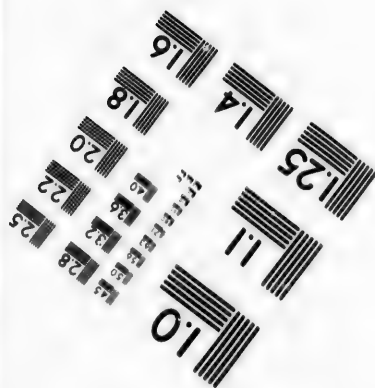
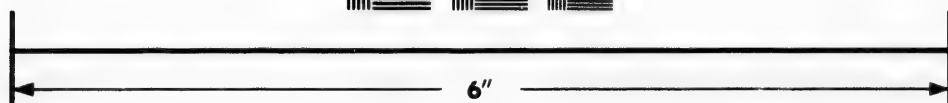
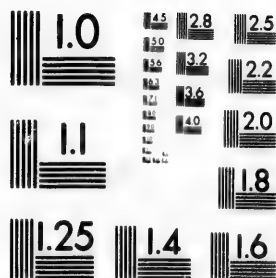


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'We have fought such a fight for a day and a night
 As may never be fought again !
 85 We have won great glory, my men !
 And a day less or more
 At sea or ashore,
 We die—does it matter when ?
 Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink her, split her in twain !
 90 Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain !'

XII.

And the gunner said 'Ay, ay,' but the seamen made reply :
 'We have children, we have wives,
 And the Lord hath spared our lives.
 We will make the Spaniard promise, if we yield, to let us go ;
 95 We shall live to fight again and to strike another blow.'
 And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded to the foe.

XIII.

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore him then,
 Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard caught at
 last,
 And they praised him to his face with their courtly foreign
 grace ;
 100 But he rose upon their decks, and he cried :
 'I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man and
 true ;
 I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do :
 With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die !'
 And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

XIV.

105 And they stared at the dead that had been so valiant and
 true,
 And had holden the power and glory of Spain so cheap

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That he dared her with one little ship and his English few;
 Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught they knew,
 But they sank his body with honour down into the deep,
 And they mann'd the Revenge with a swarthier alien crew, 110
 And away she sail'd with her loss and long'd for her own;
 When a wind from the lands they had ruin'd awoke from sleep,
 And the water began to heave and the weather to moan,
 And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,
 And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earthquake 115
 grew,
 Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their masts and
 their flags,
 And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-shatter'd navy
 of Spain,
 And the little Revenge herself went down by the island crags
 To be lost evermore in the main.

 IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

EMMIE.

I.

OUR doctor had call'd in another, I never had seen him before,
 But he sent a chill to my heart when I saw him come in at
 the door,
 Fresh from the surgery-schools of France and of other lands—
 Harsh red hair, big voice, big chest, big merciless hands!
 Wonderful cures he had done, O yes, but they said too of him 5

He was happier using the knife than in trying to save the limb,

And that I can well believe, for he look'd so coarse and so red,
I could think he was one of those who would break their jests
on the dead,

And mangle the living dog that had loved him and fawn'd at
his knee—

10 Drench'd with hellish oarali—that ever such things should be!

II.

Here was a boy—I am sure that some of our children would
die

But for the voice of Love, and the smile, and the comforting
eye—

Here was a boy in the ward, every bone seem'd out of its
place—

Caught in a mill and crush'd—it was all but a hopeless case :
15 And he handled him gently enough ; but his voice and his face
were not kind,

And it was but a hopeless case, he had seen it and made up
his mind,

And he said to me roughly 'The lad will need little more o
your care.'

'All the more need,' I told him, 'to seek the Lord Jesus in
prayer ;

They are all his children here, and I pray for them all as my
own ;'

20 But he turn'd to me, 'Ay, good woman, can prayer set a
broken bone ?'

Then he mutter'd half to himself, but I know that I heard him
say

'All very well—but the good Lord Jesus has had his day.'

III.

Had? has it come? It has only dawn'd. It will come by
and by.

O how could I serve in the wards if the hope of the world
were a lie?

How could I bear with the sights and the loathsome smells of 25
disease

But that He said 'Ye do it to me, when ye do it to these'

IV.

So he went. And we past to this ward where the younger
children are laid:

Here is the cot of our orphan, our darling, our meek little
maid;

Empty you see just now! We have lost her who loved her
so much—

Patient of pain tho' as quick as a sensitive plant to the touch; 30

Hers was the prettiest prattle, it often moved me to tears,

Hers was the gratefullest heart I have found in a child of her
years—

Nay you remember our Emmie; you used to send her the
flowers;

How she would smile at 'em, play with 'em, talk to 'em hours
after hours!

They that can wander at will where the works of the Lord 35
are reveal'd

Little guess what joy can be got from a cowslip out of the
field;

Flowers to these 'spirits in prison' are all they can know of
the spring,

They freshen and sweeten the wards like the waft of an
Angel's wing;

And she lay with a flower in one hand and her thin hands
crossed on her breast—

Wan, but as pretty as heart can desire, and we thought her 40
at rest,

Quietly sleeping—so quiet, our doctor said 'Poor little dear,

Nurse, I must do it to-morrow ; she'll never live thro' it, I fear.'

V.

I walk'd with our kindly old doctor as far as the head of the stair,
Then I return'd to the ward ; the child didn't see I was there.

VI.

45 Never since I was nurse, had I been so grieved and so vext !
Emmie had heard him. Softly she call'd from her cot to the next,

'He says I shall never live thro' it, O Annie what shall I do?'
Annie consider'd. 'If I,' said the wise little Annie, 'was you,
I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to help me, for, Emmie,
you see,

50 It's all in the picture there : "Little children should come to me."'

(Meaning the print that you gave us, I find that it always can please

Our children, the dear Lord Jesus with children about his knees.)

'Yes, and I will,' said Emmie, 'but then if I call to the Lord,
How should he know that it's me? such a lot of beds in the ward !'

55 That was a puzzle for Annie. Again she consider'd and said :
'Emmie, you put out your arms, and you leave 'em outside on the bed—

The Lord has so *much* to see to! but, Emmie, you tell it him plain,

It's the little girl with her arms lying out on the counterpane.

VII.

I had sat three nights by the child—I could not watch her for four—

My brain had begun to reel—I felt I could do it no more. 60
That was my sleeping-night, but I thought that it never
would pass.

There was a thunderclap once, and a clatter of hail on the
glass,

And there was a phantom cry that I heard as I tost about,
The motherless bleat of a lamb in the storm and the darkness
without ;

My sleep was broken besides with dreams of the dreadful knife, 65
And fears for our delicate Emmie who scarce would escape
with her life ;

Then in the gray of the morning it seem'd she stood by me
and smiled,

And the doctor came at his hour, and we went to see to the
child.

VIII.

He had brought his ghastly tools : we believed her asleep
again—

Her dear, long, lean, little arms lying out on the counterpane ; 70
Say that His day is done ! Ah why should we care what they
say ?

The Lord of the children had heard her, and Emmie had past
away.
